DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 496 CS 008 390

TITLE Illiteracy in America. Joint Hearings before the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives and the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, United States Senate, Ninety-Ninth Congress, First Session, August 1; October 1, 3, 1985.
INSTITUTION Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. House Committee on Education and Labor.; Congress of the U.S., Washington, DC. Senate Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 244p.; Serial No. 99-61. Document contains small, marginally legible print.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC10 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Literacy; *Community Role; Employer Attitudes; *Government Role; Hearings; *Illiteracy; *Literacy Education; Program Content; Program Development; Reading Instruction; *School Role; *Social Problems
IDENTIFIERS Congress 99th; *United States

ABSTRACT

Consisting of testimony and prepared materials presented to a joint session of House and Senate subcommittees, this report deals with the problem of illiteracy in the United States. The report contains statements from Richard C. Anderson, director of the Center for the Study of Reading; Samuel L. Banks, president of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc.; Herman Brown, professor of psychology at the University of the District of Columbia; Thomas G. Sticht, president of Applied Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences, Inc.; Woodrow Evans, adult education student; David P. Gardner, president of the University of California; Jonathan Kozol, author; Donald A. McCune, California State Department of Education; Renee Poussaint, reporter and volunteer tutor; Mrs. Elliot Richardson and Ruth Graves, representing Reading Is Fundamental; John C. Manning, president of the International Reading Association; Monika Sullivan, adult basic education student, and Helen Whelan, coordinator and counselor at the Fairfax County Adult and Community Education program; Mrs. Sidney Savage, president of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia; Representative Robin Tallon of South Carolina; William S. Woodside, chairman of the American Can Company; and Senator Edward Zorinsky of Nebraska. In addition, the report contains prepared statements from a number of witnesses from the business, education, and political communities, as well as supporting materials, including letters, newspaper articles, pamphlets, and journal articles. (FL)

ED268496

ILLITERACY IN AMERICA

JOINT HEARINGS

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AND THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

AUGUST 1; OCTOBER 1 AND 3, 1985
WASHINGTON, DC

Serial No. 99-61

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor and the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
55-587 O
WASHINGTON : 1986

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ILLITERACY IN AMERICA

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 1985

House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education, Committee on Education and Labor, and Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Augustus F. Hawkins (chairman of the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education) presiding.

Present: Representatives Hawkins, Williams, Owens, Martinez, and Goodling; and Senators Stafford and Simon.

Staff present: Dr. Beth Buehlmann, education staff director.

Chairman **Hawkins**. In starting the hearing today, on behalf of Senator Stafford and myself, I'd simply like to announce that the lights on the clock to my right indicate, as most of you know, a vote in the House. We will therefore have the members go over and vote and come back just as quickly as possible, and at that time we will formally open the hearing and proceed with the scheduled witnesses of the day.

So, if you will be patient with us, this may happen throughout the day, but I want you to know why we suddenly exit and then run back and interrupt sometimes some of the witnesses.

Thank you very much.

[Recess.]

Chairman **Stafford** [acting chairman]. This joint meeting of the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the House and the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities will come to order.

As a personal note, I'll say it's been quite a few years since I've had a chance to pound the gavel for any reason on this side of the Capitol—going on 15 now—but it's always nice to be back on the House side.

As soon as Chairman Hawkins gets back here, I'll return the chairman's seat to him.

Today, the Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities is meeting with the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education to hear testimony on the problem of illiteracy in our country. Illiteracy is an issue of increasing importance to the well-being of this Nation and has recently become the focus of heightened public attention.

On September 7, 1983, the Department of Education's Adult Literacy Initiative was launched under former Secretary of Education

T.H. Bell. One of the outcomes of this initiative was a recently published report, "Becoming a Nation of Readers," the report of the Commission on Reading.

This 2-year commission's purpose was to examine the teaching of reading and to make practical recommendations for improving educational instruction in America. In addition to Federal programs providing literacy skills, which are primarily funded through the Adult Education Act, there are many other exemplary public and private activities which have been described in previous testimony before the Senate Education Subcommittee.

Despite these fine efforts, the fact remains that 23 million adult Americans, or 1 in every 5, are functionally illiterate as defined by the simplest test of everyday reading, writing, and comprehension.

Adult illiteracy is found in every segment of society. Any single literacy program is not likely to be an appropriate response to the needs of the unemployed, dislocated workers, housewives entering the job market, retired persons, or the close to 1 million teenagers who drop out of high school year. Also, refugees and immigrants with little or no facility with the English language are entering the United States at an accelerating rate.

Seventy-five percent of those Americans out of work today have inadequate reading and writing skills. Any efforts we can make to reduce this problem are clearly in the Nation's best interests. There is no doubt in this Senator's mind as to the need to seriously examine the problem of illiteracy in America.

Our subcommittee would like to extend an exceptionally warm welcome to our witnesses today. We are pleased to have Mr. William Woodside from the American Can Co. as our first witness. Following him, on a panel, we have the president of the International Reading Association, Dr. John Manning; Mrs. Elliot Richardson, who is chairman of the board for Reading is Fundamental and who is accompanied by Mrs. Ruth Graves, president of Reading is Fundamental; and Mrs. Monica Sullivan, a general education development certificate recipient in Virginia, who is accompanied by Mrs. Helen Whelan, a Learning Center coordinator and placement counselor.

We look forward to hearing the testimony of the witnesses, and I should note on the record that Senator Powell, the ranking minority member of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, is unable to join us, although he had hoped to this morning, because of commitments on the Foreign Relations Committee.

I deem it personally a privilege to be here with my friend, the very able chairman of the House Committee, Congressman Hawkins, and I am very pleased to be here.

At this point, without objection—I don't see anybody to object—we will go ahead, Mr. Woodside, with you, but we will interrupt so that Chairman Hawkins can make whatever statement he wishes to at the conclusion of your testimony, or, this being his side of the Capitol, whenever he wishes.

With that understanding, Mr. Woodside, we'd be pleased to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM S. WOODSIDE, CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AMERICAN CAN CO., GREENWICH, CT

Mr. Woodside. All right, Senator. Good morning.

It's indeed an honor to address this joint hearing as it embarks on its very important mission to address illiteracy in America.

As both a businessman and a private citizen, I am appalled and dismayed by the extent of the problem of illiteracy in this country and by our apparent inability to stem its growth and its size.

There's an unmistakable relationship between illiteracy and unemployment, high crime rates, and many other social problems. Illiteracy and functional illiteracy cast a shadow on the ideals of our society. Left unattended, it will sap our national vitality in dangerous ways.

Illiteracy poses special problems within business and industry. Millions of employees with varying degrees of illiteracy cost their companies daily through low productivity, workplace accidents, absenteeism, poor product quality, and lost management and supervisory time.

A survey of employers conducted by the Center for Public Resources indicates that general productivity costs were ranked first in importance, the cost of additional management and supervision time was ranked second, product quality was ranked third, and time and effort to remediate skills was ranked fourth.

Various levels of illiteracy seriously reduce the pool of competent persons that businesses can hire and restricts the promotability and mobility of many of our current workers.

In response, corporations are paying hundreds of millions of dollars annually to operate in-house basic skills and literacy programs. A number of recent reports verify the skyrocketing growth of corporate education and training programs.

Our so-called literacy gap exists at a time when changes in the labor market are increasing the premium on communication skills and when literacy standards are higher today than they were 10 years ago.

Service industries and technology-oriented businesses require workers to be able to handle comprehensive tasks which are based more on reading, writing, and listening than on vocational skills. The "lift, place, take, put" jobs are rapidly being replaced by technology. Retraining and the ability to relearn are new career realities.

Within this context, I would like to refer the committee members to a new monograph just released by the Northeast-Midwest Institute. It is entitled "Literacy at Work: Developing Adult Basic Skills for Employment" and is the second in a series on education and economic development issues funded by a grant from the American Can Company Foundation.

Most important in this monograph is the accounting of successful remediation programs administered or funded by corporations, by public schools or community colleges, and 4-year colleges. I hope that this monograph will assist you in your deliberations.

[The booklet follows:]

Literacy at Work

Developing Adult Basic Skills for Employment

Paula Duggan

Northeast-Midwest Institute
The Center for Regional Policy

Education-Economic Development Series

This series was made possible with the generous support of the American Can Company Foundation.

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Literacy at Work

Developing Adult Basic Skills for Employment

Paula Duggan

Education-Economic
Development Series

Northeast-Midwest Institute:
The Center for Regional Policy

1985

Northeast-Midwest Institute: The Center for Regional Policy

David S. Harrison, Executive Director

The Northeast-Midwest Institute is a private, nonprofit organization devoted to research and public education on issues of regional concern. Since the Institute was established in 1977, its primary goal has been to insure that federal policies are geographically equitable and responsive to the needs of the 18-state region that long has formed the nation's industrial heartland. The Institute's primary constituency is policy-makers from the Northeast and Midwest. Business and labor leaders and members of the press from all regions also make extensive use of its work.

The Institute is unique among Washington policy centers because of its close working relationship with the Northeast-Midwest Congressional and Senate Coalitions and its strong ties to state officials in the region. These important constituencies insure that the Institute's agenda addresses the needs of the region and, equally important, that its work will have an effect on national policy.

The Institute's research program provides timely analyses of current and pending federal legislation to members of Congress, state and local officials, and other groups. These studies provide a regional perspective on the consequences of national policy choices in a wide range of issue areas. Institute publications also identify important resources and options for policy-makers. The conclusions and opinions expressed in these publications are those of the authors or Institute alone.

The states in the region served by the Northeast-Midwest Institute are Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

For further information on the Northeast-Midwest Institute and its publications, write:

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Preface

Adult illiteracy and its effects in the workplace constitute a chronic problem of growing concern in public policy debates. Illiteracy has a direct bearing on the economy—marginal or functional illiterates often have difficulty finding and holding jobs, and their skill deficiencies create costs for companies.

The phenomenon of workers displaced from their jobs presents a practical case of the complex interaction of literacy and the demands of the workplace. "Dislocated workers" have work histories, often long ones, and skills. But frequently they have difficulty finding new jobs because their basic skills in reading and computation are too limited for today's labor market.

Industry now demands higher levels of attainment in basic education than ever before. Advancing technology brings higher skill requirements. Prospective employers now place greater emphasis on "credentials." For job seekers, the result is the same: employers demand an improvement in the level of basic skills in their employees.

The following discussion identifies steps that businesses, education communities, and public policy makers can take to define literacy standards and raise basic competency levels in reading, writing, and mathematics. It argues that programs to improve literacy also can increase employment and productivity in the economy.

Employers know that a literate work force and a robust economy go hand in hand. Economic development depends on brain power. A Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, sponsored by the Education Commission of the States, concluded in 1983 that "... trained intelligence is the chief component of individual and national productivity, of a nation's capacity to innovate, and of its general economic health."[1]

This link between education and economic growth is a compelling concern in the Northeast and Midwest, where education traditionally has given the region's economy a competitive advantage. The region has benefited from high public investment levels in both K-12 and post-secondary education over the last decades. It has an impressive network of public and private universities which have played a direct and substantial role in generating economic growth.

The Northeast and Midwest continue to undergo a fundamental economic transformation. The region's economy is adjusting to change brought about by the internationalization of trade and shifts in technology. Consequently, it has a disproportionately large share of the nation's long-term unemployed—52 percent in 1983—for whom literacy skills are particularly crucial.

Efforts are well underway to spur business expansion and new job creation across the region. The public and private educational systems of these states are essential to their revitalization.

Leadership from the education community and the private sector is indispensable to state and local economic revival.

This is the second volume of a six-monograph series designed to promote stronger ties between the region's educational resources and the economic development process. Focusing on a single critical issue, each monograph is designed as a tool for public policy makers and their counterparts in business and academic institutions to translate available ideas into pragmatic solutions. The series will explore strategies that touch all educational levels, from local K-12 public school systems to higher education.

This education-economic development series is made possible through the generous support of the American Can Company Foundation.

1. The Illiteracy Problem in the United States

Dimensions of the Problem

The connection of literacy to the demands of the modern workplace has become a major concern for employers and public policy makers. A person has difficulty acquiring necessary job skills or even looking for employment in the absence of literacy. Yet evidence continues to mount that illiteracy is pervasive in some segments of the population. The director of one skill training program believes that "illiteracy is the hidden shame in this community."[2] The Northeast-Midwest region of the country has long been noted for having a well-educated and adaptable work force—an asset that has served as an attractive inducement in business location and expansion decisions. Maintaining and enhancing this "edge" is an important part of the effort to build the foundations of economic stability. Literacy is crucial to that effort.

Recent statistics indicate that up to one-third of the adult population—perhaps 60 million men and women—cannot read the front page of a newspaper. The Adult Performance Level study has shown for the past several years that perhaps 20 percent of adults are functionally illiterate—unable to read, write, or compute with the proficiency needed to function in society. Among adults, 16 percent of whites, 44 percent of blacks, and 56 percent of Hispanics are either total, functional, or marginal nonreaders. The National Assessment of Educational Progress, the ongoing study of student achievement, finds that 13 percent of U.S. high school graduates fail to reach reading and writing competence beyond the sixth-grade level. The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 2.3 million people are added each year to the ranks of the functionally illiterate: 1 million teenagers who leave school without elementary skills and 1.3 million non-English-speaking arrivals.

In 1982 Navy officials told the presidentially appointed National Commission on Excellence in Education that one-quarter of recent recruits did not read at the minimum level (ninth grade) needed to understand written safety instructions. Without remedial courses they could not even begin the sophisticated training necessary for modern military service. Based on evidence of this kind of erosion of basic skills, the commission concluded that the United States is "a nation at risk."

This literacy gap exists at a time when changes in the labor market are increasing the premium on communications skills. Employers in service industries expect employees to be able to read and write well—in many occupations these abilities comprise the major part of the job. Many companies are moving to involve employees more fully in planning and organizing work; this kind of worker participation in decision-making calls for good verbal skills. Even in more traditional manufacturing companies, the content of many jobs is changing; higher levels of reading and writing ability are becoming necessary. One adult illiterate describes the situation aptly:

> . . . today, even if you're a janitor, there's still reading and writing involved. Like if they leave a note saying, 'Go to room so-and-so, this and that.' You can't do it. You can't read it. You don't know. And they ain't going to hire somebody to run along and tell people what to do.[3]

Research confirms these recent increases in literacy needs. The Business Council for Effective Literacy found that literacy standards are higher today than they were ten years ago. In the face of these changing standards, 11 percent of today's professional and managerial workers are functionally illiterate, as are 30 percent of semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Workers face more difficult literacy demands on the job than students encounter in high schools; today even blue-collar job manuals and directions average a tenth-grade level of reading difficulty. The requirements of Army job printed materials, for example, range from a tenth- to a twelfth-grade level. While estimates of necessary reading levels for specific occupations are imprecise, several studies have concluded that a twelfth-grade reading level generally defines essential literacy for today. Studies also have found that workers who perform better on reading tests are rated higher in job proficiency and productivity as well.

The link between competitiveness and a literate work force is a compelling reason for concern over the current state of basic skills. Business losses attributable to basic skills deficiencies run into the hundreds of millions of dollars annually because of low productivity, errors and accidents, and lost management and supervisory time. Jonathan Kozol, whose *Death at an Early Age* examined the effects of poor schooling on children, writes in his recent book *Illiterate America*:

> The dollar cost to our society for our neglect of this injustice is intolerably high—$20 billion yearly to support unemployable, imprisoned or disheartened people, and in losses caused by workplace accidents and damage to military equipment, billions more lost in lowered G.N.P. The Federal Government budgets something like $1.65 a year to reach each illiterate adult in our society.[4]

Critical as the problem is for adults of working age, it has intergenerational effects as well. Children's participation in the learning process is related to the educational attainment of their parents; illiteracy thus can be "handed down." The Commission on Excellence in Education exhorted parents to read to their children, help them with homework, and act as role models by reading themselves for both knowledge and pleasure. The commission saw this as one way in which parents could support the work of the schools and improve the educational enterprise. However, many of the people to whom the recommendation was addressed could not read it. One illiterate young mother expressed frustration with the effects of her situation on her children. She said,

> I can't read to them, of course that's leaving them out of something they should have. Oh, it matters. You believe it matters! . . . Donny wanted me to read a book to

> him .... I tried it one day, reading from the pictures. Donny looked at me. He said, 'Mommy that's not right.' He's only 5. He knew I couldn't read.[5]

A current public service announcement on television promotes the national literacy campaign by picturing a father trying to read a story to his young daughter ... and failing.

The result is a cycle of illiteracy and poverty in which children repeat the life experiences of their parents. Kozol summarizes the problem:

> Illiterate adults are crippled ... in at least three ways. They cannot find employment, which, today more than ever in the past, depends upon a competence that eludes them. They cannot voice their grievances in press releases or in other forms of discourse that might win political attention and response. They cannot help their children escape a comparable fate.[6]

A Particular Case: Dislocated Workers

The situation of many dislocated workers—out of work and with slim prospects of reemployment—illustrates the relationship between literacy and jobs. Dislocated workers typically have been on the job and out of school for many years. Most went to work directly from high school, before or after graduating, for a firm (usually manufacturing) at which one of their parents was employed, and expected to stay there until retirement.

Now, however, many of their jobs have disappeared because of international competition, plant relocation, or technological obsolescence. Where new jobs exist, they frequently have different, often higher, literacy requirements. Workers may have to review (or learn for the first time) reading, writing, and basic mathematics in order to *start* the training for more complex jobs. Recognizing and adjusting to this need for competence in basic skills is difficult for dislocated workers who typically complain, "I didn't need it before—why do I need it now." However, remedial education and basic skills instruction can help reemploy some of these workers, thereby strengthening the economy.

Dislocation affects a large number of the unemployed. An ongoing study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found that over 5 million workers were dislocated from 1979 to 1984. The high incidence of long-term unemployment in the Northeast-Midwest region signals the existence of disproportionate numbers of dislocated workers in these states. In 1983, 44 percent of the unemployed in the region were out of work for 15 weeks or more. Also, dislocation has been especially pronounced in industries historically central to the region's economy, such as manufacturing and mining. Plant shutdowns and mass layoffs have become frequent occurrences.

According to the BLS study, many dislocated workers had been in their jobs for relatively long periods—nearly one-third for 10 years or more. By January 1984, 60 percent of these workers had found new employment and about 25 percent were looking for work; the remainder had dropped out of the labor force. The BLS survey found that the higher the skill level of the worker, the greater the chance for reemployment. However, of the 60 percent who were reemployed, almost one-half were earning less than in previous jobs; over 600,000 had taken pay cuts of 20 percent or more.

Prolonged unemployment and underemployment are expensive; economists estimate that each one percent of unemployment costs the federal government $30 billion in outlays for assistance and in forgone revenue. Idled physical plant capacity creates costs for businesses: production is affected adversely by the changed ratio of investment in capital and labor, and profits fall. Increased outlays for unemployment benefits translate into higher unemployment insurance taxes for employers. Unemployment and underemployment drain state and local treasuries and reduce revenues. Tight budgets force cutbacks in services, including cutbacks in education.

Beyond the personal suffering of dislocated workers and their families, these costs heighten the urgency of getting people reemployed as quickly as possible in well-paying jobs. Employers, educators, and governments all have a stake in this effort. Producing a more literate work force is one key to its success.

Some dislocated workers find new jobs on their own; others need training in new skills before they can be reemployed. However, employers, unions, and training program operators have found that many dislocated workers lack the basic literacy skills required for their courses. One assistance center, Downriver Community Conference in Southgate, Michigan, estimates that 30 percent of its dislocated worker clients read at or below the sixth-grade level and need remedial education before they can be retrained. The Career Development Institute at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio, found that 25 percent of its clients tested between seventh- and ninth-grade levels in reading and math with another 35 percent in the fifth- to seventh-grade levels.

Some journalistic accounts of dislocated workers contain discussions of exciting training programs to prepare people for the jobs of tomorrow. A 1983 article in *High Technology* magazine described the successful robotics repair program operated by the Community College of Allegheny County in Erie, Pennsylvania. Thirty workers were selected from 200 applicants for this program. Most had gone to vocational high schools and 18 had received training in electronics in their military service. Participants averaged ten years of experience in electromechanical repair. The program's director acknowledged that the program intends to train " . . . more or less the cream of the crop of the U.S. blue-collar work force."[7] Workers with functional literacy deficiencies would not be chosen for such a demanding program. Press reports have paid scant attention to the needs of a significant number of laid-off workers for remedial instruction to raise the level of their basic educational attainment. Even trainers in private companies and public programs are just beginning to recognize the need.

Costs to the private sector of basic skills deficiencies and the benefits of remediation are not precisely quantifiable. However, there is a growing awareness that the United States is falling short of the goal of a fully literate work force. This awareness must now be translated into action. Business leaders and public policy makers alike acknowledge the positive relationship between literacy and a growing economy.

4

2. Employers' Response to Illiteracy

Employers recognize that the lack of basic skills among Americans is of crisis proportions in many parts of the employment market. And the problem can only worsen, if, as some economists predict, the United States faces impending labor shortages in the coming decade. **Businesses must mobilise their resources to increase employee literacy in ways that are consistent with their own needs for productivity in increasingly competitive world markets**.

The Center for Public Resources, a private, nonprofit organization, surveyed employers nationally in 1982 to determine the extent of basic skill deficiencies among their employees.

- More than one-half the responding companies identified writing deficiencies among their secretarial, skilled labor, managerial, supervisory and bookkeeping personnel. The most frequently cited problems were poor grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Over one-half found inadequacies in mathematics in a wide range of employees, from semi-skilled laborers to bookkeepers.
- More than one-half identified deficiencies in speaking and listening skills among secretarial, clerical, service, supervisory, and managerial personnel.
- Over two-thirds noted that basic skills deficiencies limit the company's ability to promote employees, both high school graduates and nongraduates.

The study concluded:

> While school respondees often cited vocational skills as the most important factor in youth employability, the business view was that if schools provided adequately educated youth, business would provide, indeed overwhelmingly does provide, technical training. What business decidedly indicated it did not want to do, but is in fact doing, is to educate its employees in ninth- and tenth-grade skills.[5]

Companies can provide programs to upgrade their employees' basic skills. For example, the Planters Peanuts factory in Suffolk, Virginia, offers its workers four hours of elementary-level instruction per week on company time, with additional classes available after hours. Employees can work on basic skills in grade levels 1-4 and 5-8, as well as prepare for the General Educational Development exam which leads to the GED certificate of high school equivalency. Instruction is individualized and the curriculum is designed to meet each person's needs. Planters runs the program with the public schools and the United Auto Workers. Standard Oil Company of Indiana hired a teacher to give courses in grammar and spelling for new secretaries. Polaroid Corporation enrolls 500 to 750 employees annually in remedial programs. In 1983, the Gillette

Company in St. Paul, Minnesota, offered remedial instruction to 30 employees. The company renewed the program in 1984 when it discovered that one in six production workers needed the instruction.

The Conference Board, a network of business leaders which conducts research on the economy and public policy, reported that 20 percent of the nation's banks and insurance companies provide remedial and basic literacy courses to employees lacking the necessary skills. Travelers Insurance Company has had a remedial education program for the past 16 years. By December 1982, 616 Travelers employees had completed the program successfully. Participants receive eight weeks of full-time classroom training, studying math and English as well as basic office skills. Successful completers then spend ten weeks in a combination work-study component, with mornings devoted to classroom instruction and afternoons to on-the-job training. Company officials attribute the program's success to several factors.

- Trainees are Travelers employees from the outset. Therefore, the relationship between completing the training and doing well in the job is clear.
- The physical environment simulates real work situations rather than a classroom.
- Everything taught, including English and math, is shown to be directly relevant to the job. There is a concrete purpose for the learning.
- Participants have access to individual counseling to improve life-coping skills. This service is particularly important to persons with low levels of reading comprehension because they have difficulty with written information.[9]

Although examples can be found, company-sponsored in-house programs focused solely on remediation account for only a small fraction of private-sector training investments. One recent study found that only 8 percent of courses offered by employers during working hours are basic remedial courses. The American Society for Training and Development, an association of private-sector human resources managers, estimates that less than 1 percent of company training funds are spent on remedial education. Even so, corporate participants in a recent series of forums on business and education felt that business is spending too much time and money on remedial training in communications and other basic skills. Typical company programs, such as Travelers, are geared to new entry-level employees and are combined with training in the company's operations. Often they are partially supported by federal job training funds aimed at the disadvantaged. Only very large corporations with major in-house training capacities are likely to find it efficient to cover the entire cost of their own basic literacy training.

The American Telephone and Telegraph Company offers its employees courses in basic reading, writing, and mathematics at an annual cost of $6 million. However, the company's policy shows the cautious approach of most corporations. It calls for a review of the cost and benefits of alternative methods of providing remedial education, such as contracting with community institutions or providing tuition aid. It also calls for assurances that graduates can be placed in jobs before undertaking such training. "In most companies, efforts are constantly being made even to reduce the cost of specifically job related training, so it is small wonder that employers are generally conservative about literacy training for which the cost-benefits are less clear . . . ," said a company official.[10]

Company policy also calls for the definition and measurement of program objectives beforehand. Standards should be set for measuring success in terms of participants' job behavior, not merely their ability to pass tests. Any program should have realistic goals tied to practical business needs—the development and maintainence of a proficient and motivated work force. The program also should be evaluated systematically.

As this policy suggests, **companies may do well to contract with educational institutions or community-based organizations for their employees' remedial needs**. Several Maryland companies, including Baltimore Gas and Electric, Marriott Corporation, and Singer-Link Simulations Systems, contract with the adult education branch of the state department of education for basic skills classes conducted at company sites. Costs are shared by the companies and the adult basic education program.

This approach can be used by companies planning to shut down or relocate. Carter Carburetor Company in St. Louis contracted with the local school system to have adult basic education instructors hold classes in the plant prior to its closing in 1984. In this way the company made a major commitment to helping its employees make the transition to new jobs. In 1983 the Levi Strauss Company helped relieve the potential for dislocation among its laid-off workers in Charleston, South Carolina, by purchasing needed educational services. The company arranged with Trident Technical College for a program of assistance as layoffs began. The program prepared workers for retraining by helping them develop coping skills. They were then given instruction in math, English, and reading. Exercises were designed in individualized units so participants could work at their own pace, even completing them at home. All participants received counselling on career decisions using peer role models. They reported that the basic skills instruction increased their confidence and self-esteem. Only when they overcame their fear of learning and began to feel comfortable with the basics did participants feel ready for skill retraining.

Perhaps the best-known dislocated workers programs are the ongoing efforts sponsored by the United Auto Workers in cooperation with Ford and General Motors. The Ford-UAW model emphasizes the necessity of combining community resources to help the newly unemployed. In the Milpitas plant closing in San Jose, for example, Ford and the UAW contracted with the local adult education office to provide courses at the plant, including remedial math and reading. Eight hundred persons altogether participated in adult education, and 183 received high school diplomas or GEDs. The UAW-Ford program recognizes remedial education as an important, sometimes crucial, component in an overall worker-readjustment strategy. It is this new mastery of the basics that increases workers' self-confidence and opportunities for reemployment. Other dislocated worker programs have duplicated the UAW-Ford approach.

The Kelly Springfield Tire Company realized that an alternative to closing its Tyler, Texas, plant was to convert it and upgrade the basic skills of employees so they could run the new facility. Presently 230 employees take part in the remedial program, which operates during regular working hours and gives full pay for the first 100 hours of participation.

In addition to working on specific literacy needs of their own employees, both current and former, companies contribute to the solution of the national illiteracy crisis by forming partnerships with educational institutions and community-based groups to improve basic skills. The attitude of AT&T toward cooperative projects is typical of many forward-looking businesses.

> Communication between business and education must be greatly expanded. This must take place on a national level, but it is even more important on a local level. There must be a combined effort of business and education to provide the literacy skills necessary for productive employment.[11]

Several models already exist which businesses could adapt to fit their own needs and the particular circumstances of their local communities.

Companies can commit themselves one-to-one with a particular secondary school. "Adopt-a-School" programs pair schools and businesses to work on jointly identified problems. While they generally concentrate on school-to-work transition activities, some Adopt-a-School programs focus on basic skills. Some companies provide useful advice to schools on the literacy expectations of the local business community. Corporations with active outreach policies such as IBM and Hewlett-Packard pair company employees with individual students as tutors in reading, writing, and mathematics. B. Dalton Bookseller and McGraw Hill Publishing Company, both active school adopters, have a special interest in the broad goal of a literate society.

Adoptive relationships have other outcomes as well. In some programs one company and one school work together to improve curricula. In other places company employees visit their school to counsel students and provide role models to encourage them to further achievement. Some loan equipment to their schools to ensure up-to-date vocational instruction. Company officials also work with school administrators to improve management.

The Adopt-a-School movement is growing. In Nashville, for example, 30 area businesses have allied themselves with specific schools. In Dallas, over 1,000 businesses have adopted virtually all of the city's more than 200 public schools. In Milwaukee, the Chamber of Commerce manages the process of teaming companies with schools. All activities undertaken in these collaborations are arrived at jointly.

Companies also must become more broadly involved in policy-making, resource allocation, and planning for their local secondary school systems as a whole. Business leaders are joining top-echelon educational administrators and contributing their resources, time, and expertise to designing system improvements. Many of these efforts focus on basic skills. The goal is to improve the quality of literacy training in the community's secondary school system so as to raise the average skill levels of new entrants into the work force.

Financial investment is one type of system involvement for business. Many corporations have instituted social responsibility programs that include making direct grants to school systems. The John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company established a $1 million endowment for the Boston school system in 1985 that will generate $100,000 annually in interest. The system will use some of the income to improve the reading program in the city's middle schools, which enroll 10,000 students.

Companies also can become partners with the education system in planning and policy-making. The Boston Compact is an example of such a community-wide partnership. Executives of major corporations in the city, the administrators of secondary schools, colleges and community colleges, and leaders of community groups make decisions on how best to use all available resources to raise the skill levels of high school students. In return for educational system improvements, the corporations pledge to look first to the city's schools as a potential source of new employees.

The Boston Compact is a true partnership in that responsibility and accountability exist on both sides of the business-education equation. Improvements in the school system translate into jobs for its graduates. Also, cooperation is more than financial; the time and expertise of top executives on both sides are thoroughly engaged. The compact can command this level of involvement because it is a locally generated agreement arising from mutual needs for better performance and because it has the sustained interest and support of the city's political leadership. Other system-wide partnership efforts, including the Oakland Alliance in California and the Portland Partnership in Oregon, have these same characteristics.

These industry-education collaborations concentrate on secondary schools and youth just entering the work force. Many were spurred by the well-publicized critiques of the nation's school systems, especially *A Nation at Risk*, the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983. However, the Commission on Higher Education and the Adult Learner pointed out that the excellence commission limited its recommendations to reforms in the education of youth, reinforcing the idea that learning is only for the young and that adults have completed their schooling.

> Yet adults' education needs are at least as great as those of the young and constitute an equivalent obligation for policy and societal action. Clearly, a major effort is required to raise the level of awareness among education providers, government, prospective adult learners, and the general public.[12]

Companies can target their concern and activities on adult illiterates in the wider community beyond the schools. Businesses should involve themselves in community-based adult literacy efforts and programs in adult basic education. Company actions are wide ranging. Numerous corporations are contributing funds to public literacy-awareness efforts at national, state, and local levels. The Ashland Oil Corporation provided a major grant through its charitable foundation to the Kentucky educational television network for a campaign encouraging adults to earn their GED certificates. Viewers will be directed to a variety of programs designed to suit their individual needs—school-based instruction, on-site courses provided by employers, or study-at-home programs.

IBM Corporation makes grants to community-based organizations as part of its commitment to the literacy movement. In 1984, IBM joined with other companies in Washington, D.C., to give financial support to Pursue Literacy Action Now (PLAN), a community-based program to help city residents with basic skills. It also contributed funds to Philadelpia's Center for Literacy to expand adult basic skills services at several tutorial sites around the city.

Companies can encourage their employees to participate in community-based volunteer programs. B. Dalton Bookseller, already involved in many adult education strategies in the 500 communities where its outlets are located, recently undertook a campaign to enlist employees on all levels to tutor adults in basic skills. It hopes to recruit 10 percent of the company's 8,500 employees. A recent company survey showed that over one-half of its regional managers serve on boards and advisory committees of local and state literacy organizations. Recently Time, Inc. expanded its remedial education strategies beyond direct funding for literacy programs to include organizing employee volunteers. Pacific Gas and Electric Company gives release time to employees who tutor students in the basic skills program of the San Francisco Community College District.

Some companies have opened their in-house remedial programs to the larger community. In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company uses the services of Forsyth Technical Institute to provide an in-plant adult basic education program. The program is open to dislocated workers in the community as well. Classes meet four days a week at times chosen to accommodate day, evening, and midnight shifts and unemployed persons. Treasure Isle, Inc., a Florida shrimp company, set up a small training center on company grounds to upgrade its workers' skills. Now the center is open to all adults in the community. The company pays custodial and utility costs, the county school system provides teachers, and the adult education program furnishes money for supplies and equipment. Since the program began, 300 learners have advanced from functional illiteracy to eighth-grade reading levels.

Companies can contribute to public awareness of the literacy problem by documenting its scope and impact. At the national level, several blue-ribbon groups of corporate leaders have announced their concern over basic educational attainment. This national perspective must be brought home to the local level. For example, Standard Oil of Ohio currently is sponsoring a project in the Cleveland area to clarify the extent and nature of the illiteracy problem there and determine what action is needed. In other areas, local Chambers of Commerce could take the lead to study the literacy needs in their communities from a business perspective. Trade associations could assess the occupational structures in their member companies and the literacy requirements of various job categories. This research contribution would be invaluable in raising the level of public debate and suggesting directions for educational improvement to meet business demands in basic skills. AT&T, in fact believes that,

> Obtaining worthwhile data on abilities needed in jobs is not an impossible task but it is, indeed, a complicated one. Unless jobs can be described accurately in a language which is useful for curriculum development, it may well be useless to discuss adult literacy training.[13]

Companies also can use their political power and connections to influence decisions on funds and priorities for public institutions. Business groups already have formed in Memphis, New Orleans, and Cincinnati to work for the passage of tax levies to benefit education. Efforts of individual companies to ease the literacy crisis are important, but in the long run, success will depend on collective efforts to influence policy in state capitals and in Washington. Companies must organize themselves into highly focused coalitions to provide sustained support to the public institutions whose job it is to equip people with the basic skills required by the labor market.

Some employers already have decried basic skills deficiencies in their workers and in job applicants. Others are concerned that employees facing termination lack the elementary skills to find new jobs or take advantage of retraining. At the present time, most companies have ample choices in a slack labor market. Yet in the next decade demographic changes—an aging work force and a pool of younger applicants increasingly comprised of the educationally and economically disadvantaged—could reduce the range of choice. "Literacy for all" is becoming as much an economic imperative as it is a social and cultural one.

Recommendations

Company officials can:

- identify the literacy requirements of current and future jobs;
- make these requirements known in local business forums, such as the Private Industry Council or the Chamber of Commerce;
- announce these basic skills requirements to schools and training institutions and the policy-making bodies that govern and/or fund them, such as local school committees and elected officials, state legislatures, and the public at large;
- invest in the basic skills of current employees through in-house programs where appropriate;
- contract directly for needed remedial services with programs and institutions that have shown a willingness and capacity to respond;
- organize company employees to tutor individuals in reading, writing, and math by "adopting" a school or organizing a "literacy volunteers" program;
- join community-wide business-education partnerships to improve the overall quality of education for work with better planning and management expertise;
- commit themselves to hire

the graduates of programs and institutions that provide strong basic skills; and

- exercise political clout in support of the public institutions and programs charged with imparting the basic skills needed for work to youth and adults.

3. What Schools and Public Agencies Can Do

Improve the Assessment Capacity

The first step in a comprehensive attack on the problem of illiteracy is identifying who needs help. Many states now require that students pass minimum competency tests in order to graduate from high school. However, many of these tests are "subminimum" in relation to the literacy needs of the workplace or further schooling. Testing in the twelfth grade is too late: literacy problems have their roots in early grades. Alaska, Connecticut, Arizona, Ohio, and Mississippi are among the states that use basic skills testing programs at various levels below the twelfth grade to catch deficiencies soon enough to make a difference.

The National Center for Education Statistics estimates that 25 percent of those entering high school eventually will drop out. A major cause of this phenomenon is the inability of students to read, write, and compute up to grade level. Many of these people will show up later on as adult illiterates. **Early identification and action on the problem is a major unfulfilled responsibility of public elementary and secondary education systems.** It is a sad reflection on these school systems that 25 percent of all college mathematics courses today are remedial. Courses offered most frequently at community colleges are those in remedial reading, writing, and arithmetic. The Task Force on Education for Economic Growth pointed out that:

> . . . the United States no longer teaches the three R's, but the six R's: remedial reading, remedial 'riting and remedial 'rithmetic. It should be our long-range goal to end remedial courses wherever possible: to make them unnecessary—because our schools will have done their work effectively the first time.[14]

The Florida legislature declared in the 1983-1984 session that its public secondary schools, not post-secondary institutions, bear responsibility for remediation. California law proscribes remedial education courses in the state's community colleges.

Identifying adult illiterates is more difficult than testing and offering remedial courses to behind-grade students. Adults find ways to cope. They stick to familiar neighborhoods where reading street signs is unnecessary; they buy groceries by looking at pictures on labels. They get through the work day (if they have jobs) by imitating and copying what others do. Often they ask friends to fill out forms, applications, and tax returns for them.

Employers have difficulty in identifying the marginally literate. Based on the Supreme Court's interpretation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, employers cannot give reading tests as part of an employment-screening process unless they can prove that such tests measure the kinds of reading needed for the job. Courts have been stringent in their application of this rule, even though few job-specific reading tests have been developed. Thus people reading at substandard levels find their way into the workplace.

Public agencies can be enlisted to identify illiteracy and contribute to the effort to overcome it. Senator Paul Simon (D-Illinois) has suggested that the welfare office and the unemployment insurance office could be used effectively to establish who needs help.

> In the area of welfare, we have to take a look at who signs up. You don't have to ask them if they can read or write. If they can't fill out the form, that ought to be noted. We ought to get help for them. We shouldn't simply be saying we're going to give you a check. A check, yes, but let's give people some help on their problems. Unemployment compensation—the same. A huge number of people are involved and we ought to find the illiterates among them.[15]

Every state has Employment Service offices that also could provide assistance. When the federal government reduced this agency's budget in the early 1980s, the Employment Service (ES) cut back on testing and assessment activities in favor of keeping local offices open. Now, however, these priorities should be reviewed. Those involved in the new (since 1982) ES planning process—especially local elected officials and private-sector business leaders—could explore ways to reprogram available resources to strengthen and expand testing and assessment services. They could, for example, convince state policy makers to target these functions as a priority for discretionary state ES funds.

Adequate assessment is essential to placing adults with basic skills problems, including many dislocated workers, in skill-training programs that match their abilities or into jobs appropriate to their capabilities. When a mismatch occurs, the person is frustrated and the productivity of companies and economic goals of the community are impaired. Corporations such as Digital Equipment have recognized the value of the assessment function in designing skills development programs. Digital uses extensive diagnostic testing to design programs to help their employees realize their full potential in the workplace.

Community colleges, vocational-technical schools, and other training program operators also must assess more carefully the basic skill levels of incoming students and trainees. They should guide new entrants into training programs and remedial activities corresponding to their proficiencies. **Educators also should recognize the implicit expectations in these courses of the level of basic skills needed for success.** Recently, two parallel studies funded by the National Institute of Education reached the joint conclusion "... that teachers in community colleges rarely talk with each other about the literacy requirements of their individual courses and programs."[16] Thus public resources may be wasted as those people seeking to improve their employment potential through training and education fail and drop out. Better assessment of basic skills on both sides of the equation—individual attainment and program assumptions—is one key to harnessing the nation's education resources to economic development needs.

Increase the Flexibility of Educational Institutions

As the literacy requirements of the workplace mount and the need for adult education grows, businesses look increasingly to educational institutions and expect them to respond. To meet these demands, schools and colleges must develop more flexible programs and calendars. Traditional classroom models with rigid semester-based schedules and "seat-time" measures of success do not serve illiterate adults, dropouts, or behind-grade youth well. The Commission on Higher Education and the Adult Learner concluded in a 1984 report that,

> Much about postsecondary education is inappropriate for adult learners; within the present system, there is excessive standardization, insufficient individualization, needless repetition, and inadequate recognition of prior learning. State funding formulas are too frequently obsolete, ignoring part-time faculty and off-campus locations, and anxiety about new partnerships hampers collaboration with business, industry, and others with educational needs. What appears to be a golden opportunity for cooperation among education providers is very slow in coming; the higher education establishment must change if it is to be an effective partner.[17]

Community colleges and vocational-technical schools generally adapt to marketplace realities more quickly than traditional four-year institutions. Yet employment specialists fault even community colleges for offering programs that extend over too long a time period, given the daily economic pressures the unemployed face, and that demand reading and mathematical proficiences beyond their present capabilities.

Illiterate adults have radically different educational backgrounds and life situations, which makes it impossible to design one program for all. For example, a plant closing may mean layoffs and dislocation for hundreds of people at once. But they do not arrive at the training institution at once, nor do they have the same needs or require the same amount of time to acquire new skills. **These people make up a large constituency for educational services if the necessary changes are made. Officials of secondary and appropriate post-secondary schools should adapt their institutions to these adult learners.**

Several courses of action lie open for the education community. Educational administrators—academic deans and curriculum planners—can initiate the sorts of changes that will benefit adult learners.

Educational administrators should structure remedial efforts to relate to possible future jobs, rather than providing basic skills instruction by itself. For years the Army has defined basic skills as "the academic competencies essential to learning and performing a military job." To achieve this end, the Army has attempted to mesh basic skills instruction with job training. It started a major program in 1980 to improve job performance through a refined approach to basic skill competencies. The program seeks to identify the basic skill levels needed for training in 94 military service occupations. Competency levels are defined by desired performance on the job, not by reference to years completed in school. New diagnostic tests were developed to analyze tasks, and new curricula currently are being developed to teach basic skills in each job context. According to the Army, these products may be transferable to civilian training and education in related vocational skill areas.

The Boston Private Industry Council favors programs that develop basic competencies and job skills simultaneously. The previously mentioned programs of the Travelers Insurance Company and Downriver Community Conference also use this approach—which recognizes that adult learning occurs more readily on the job or in other practical situations. When remedial instruction is delivered in tandem with skill training, attention is focused on the particular kind of reading or math needed. Remedial efforts become more relevant to trainees, who otherwise may not be aware of basic skills deficiencies. Workers also have greater incentive to learn when there may be a direct payoff in a new job.

The Career Development Institute at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland structures its program to guide participants toward making these informational and motivational connections between remedial education and training. Its director insists, "this is *not* an abstract program."[18] In 1982, Portland Community College in Oregon provided instruction in remedial mathematics or math upgrading plus job skills training to a selected number of the city's unemployed residents. A German company, Wacker Siltronic Corporation, helped the college design the program and select the instructors. This guarantee of specially trained workers was a major factor in convincing the company to build its new $60-million plant in Portland. The first 460 production jobs were filled by workers who developed or upgraded their basic and technical skills through the Portland-Wacker partnership. This is a prime example of what an investment in adult learning can contribute to a community's development.

Administrators should use self-paced, individualized, competency-based methods of instruction and institute open entry-open exit programming. Participants in self-paced programs begin at their own convenience as soon as they have decided on a course of action. Each person devotes the needed time, but only that, to mastering the course content. For this kind of program to operate successfully, the curriculum should be modular —constructed in discrete units—so that different people can work on different parts at the same time. Ideally, it should be computerized in an interactive mode so students can learn from their mistakes without fear of embarrassment before their peers. In this program design, the teacher is a manager of the learning process rather than an instructor.

Flexible, nonthreatening programs are particularly important for adults, many of whom must overcome psychological barriers and an aversion to schooling caused by earlier failures. Adult workers dislocated from their jobs, who worked for years and never anticipated a return to school, find the freedom and self-reliance permitted by this program design attractive. The Job

Corps, a work preparation program for very disadvantaged youth, is the most systematic user of this type of educational programming. While the Levi Strauss-Trident program previously cited trained dislocated workers this way, too few Job Corps instructional methods have been adopted in mainstream educational institutions.

The city of Cleveland operates a successful remedial reading program developed when it found in 1982 that 50 percent of the disadvantaged unemployed population over the age of 25 was functionally illiterate. Cleveland's program, budgeted at $1.2 million for 1985, uses Control Data Corporation's computerized "PLATO" system to prepare the disadvantaged for jobs requiring a high school education. The program proceeds in three stages. Those with skills below the sixth-grade level go through a remedial program that aims to move them up two grade levels in ten weeks. Participants then are ready for training and job-directed remediation. After 12 weeks, they prepare for the GED examination and high school equivalency status. The state of Ohio currently is planning to spend $3 million of its federal job training funds to replicate this program in other cities.

Educational administrators should seek the expertise and support of the business community regularly to solve basic skills problems. The current patchwork quilt of adult education programs needs a focal point to capture business attention. Employers may need a new institutional structure around which to frame their involvement in adult literacy efforts. Schools should organize the existing piecemeal efforts in remedial and adult basic education into a coherent system. With a more clearly defined structure, the business community would have a more direct avenue for its views, recommendations, and assistance.

Educational administrators also can obtain private-sector help through their local Private Industry Councils—organizations of leading community employers. These councils decide on appropriate uses of federal job training funds for disadvantaged youth and adults and, in some cases, for dislocated worker programs as well. Involvement with a PIC offers educators the opportunity to understand local employers' expectations and problems with basic skill levels. They also can get advice on how schools could improve their product and better tap into the hiring process. Cooperation also gives educational administrators a chance to market education services to employers. In demonstrating how schools can fill the training and remedial education needs identified by the PIC, schools can become "delivery agents of first resort" for PIC-sponsored programs.

St. Louis Community College and the Private Industry Council designed the Metropolitan Re-Employment Project to help dislocated workers find new jobs. It started with private-sector contributions and funding from the Job Training Partnership Act and the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education in 1981. In its first year of operation, the project found that less than 2 percent of laid-off workers were seeking retraining or further education on their own. Each dislocated worker believed, "I'm not the sort of person who needs that sort of thing." But assessment showed that nearly 20 percent of its potential clients were reading at only a fifth-grade level.

The project expanded its activities to provide testing, assessment, and counseling and made referrals to adult basic education courses in community colleges and high schools (as well as to retraining programs and new jobs). The college-PIC collaboration has provided a myriad of services to 5,000 workers in the last four years. Funding for the project continues with the help of Civic Progress, an organization of the chief executive officers of the largest corporations in St. Louis.

The public response to the literacy crisis involves numerous institutions and individuals in the education and training communities: the Employment Service, community colleges, secondary schools, training programs, Private Industry Councils, and so on. The success of their activities has an effect on the ability of local businesses to fill their labor needs and compete successfully. Companies have a stake in literacy levels and must be enlisted in the basic skills battle. Public institutions have their own mandate for action as well.

Recommendations

Educators and trainers should:

- assess both basic skill levels of those seeking training and identify the levels needed for success in training courses to assure a match between them;
- provide remedial and literacy instruction as necessary;
- organize the array of adult education and remedial programs to make them comprehensible and accessible for companies and the public;
- make remedial activities relevant to participants' job goals and employment prospects;
- institute open entry-open exit, self-paced, competency-based programming to make educational services appropriate and attractive to dislocated workers and other adults in need;
- seek business recommendations, support, and assistance by organizing employer committees or joining the Private Industry Council; and
- join community-wide business and education partnerships to invest in the improvment of the overall quality of education for work.

4. State and Federal Responses to the Problem

State policy makers must play their part in strengthening the basic skills of their citizens to ensure a strong work force base for economic growth. They set the context for local action even though actual services—literacy training and remedial programs in reading, writing, and math—are delivered locally. **State policy makers can promote greater recognition of and commitment to solving the literacy problem. They can combine state and federal aid to maximise resources available for the effort**. The national call for educational reform has led every state to take some steps for change. More than 250 state task forces have sprung up to date to study every aspect of education. Most have focused on the achievement of youth in secondary schools; few have devoted attention to the issue of adult literacy and the remedial efforts necessary to achieve it.

Governors should take the lead by establishing as state policy the goal of a fully literate work force. Business recognizes it as an essential part of a favorable climate for economic growth. Robert Orr, governor of Indiana, recently signaled his understanding of this connection. "I see the Indiana Literacy Initiative as helping us not only with our fight against illiteracy, but with our overall economic development strategies as well," he said.[19] Governors could engage the state's business and educational leaders in examining the extent of literacy needs and recommending action. These leaders might be charged with developing a resource inventory of literacy programs, both company-sponsored and publicly funded, around the state. Communities and companies then could use this information to locate program models appropriate to their own circumstances and share ideas and experiences with other program managers. Such a network of data and people could become an important service to business from the state's economic development arsenal.

State legislatures should assure adequate appropriations for adult literacy programs. States now provide over one-half the funding for local education. State legislators are in constant communication with local business and educational leaders. Legislatures thus are well positioned to champion the cause of adult literacy. Business leaders should make known to the appropriate legislative committees their views on the soundness of the educational enterprise and its products, and the extent to which they match workplace needs.

Federal policy makers in Congress and the executive branch should sort out competing claims for scarce federal education funds and focus them on true national priorities. Congress should direct federal spending in vocational and adult education to leverage improvements in program design and services for population groups in particular need, such as illiterate adults. Federal aid-to-education acts should enable state and local efforts to meet the important national goal of a fully literate work force, rather than dictating and specifying minutely how this goal is to be accomplished.

State education officials should examine how federal education resources, such as vocational education and adult education funds, are spent. These officials—chief state school officers and members of state boards of education—can work for the integration of these resources with state and local spending to produce a comprehensive system of work force preparation programs. They should analyze how effective those federal funds are in enhancing and improving ongoing state efforts, and how they might better be used to improve adult literacy. They should look particularly at how these education-oriented funds can be used to complement job training programs.

State officials responsible for the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) should look for the most effective uses of this law's various sections. Title III of JTPA directs funds to states for the establishment of programs of training and reemployment assistance for dislocated workers. State JTPA administrators can make sure their state's JTPA-funded dislocated workers projects contain sufficient education components. They should direct more of these funds to remedial efforts, if appropriate. Title III officials also could tap educational sources to complement job training programs. If federal Title III funds must be matched with state contributions, remedial education activities might provide the source. Another section of JTPA provides that 8 percent of the state's allocation for Title II should be used for educational services and coordination. State officials responsible for this set aside could use the 8 percent funds for more adult remedial education and encourage similar efforts in the education community.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 contains provisions that commend it to state education and training officials. It authorizes funds for coordinated services and activities between vocational education and the JTPA dislocated workers program. It also allows the use of funds for upgrading the skills of workers threatened with dislocation. Joint programs focused on improving basic skills in the course of vocational training would be a practical way to implement these legislative priorities.

A third part of the Job Training Partnership Act establishes a special fund of 10 percent of a state's allocation for the Employment Service. This set aside, aimed at local program improvements, could provide the means for strengthening the assessment and testing capacity of the Employment Service. The special needs of illiterate adults and the dislocated workers among them would be well served by this use of funds.

State employment and training officials can tap the expertise of business leaders on the State Job Training Coordinating Council, the governor's advisory committee for the Job Training Partnership Act. These private-sector members know the work force needs of the state's employers and any literacy problems that may exist. They can take the lead in achieving the kind of education and training system that the state's economy requires for growth.

State and federal policy can spur local action to benefit the efforts of employers and educators. By enlisting the state's business leaders in making literacy an essential part of state development goals, governors can rally local companies. Legislators can highlight the need as they design and oversee state aid-to-education budgets. Congress can do the same as it sets priorities for federal spending. Those who administer federal categorical funds in education and training can work jointly to make their programs complementary to each other and to state, local, and private-sector remedial activities.

Notes

1. Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, *Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools* (Washington, D.C.: Education Commission of the States, June 1983), p. 18.

2. Training program brochure, Oakland, California, June 1983.

3. Ellen Cole, *The Experience of Illiteracy* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Union Graduate School, 1976), p. 123.

4. Jonathan Kozol, "The Crippling Inheritance," *New York Times Book Review*, March 3, 1985, p. 27.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Daniel Gottlieb, "High Technology Training Surges," *High Technology*, October 1983, p. 71.

8. James F. Henry, "Expectations of the Workplace: Basic Skills in the U.S. Workforce," in *Functional Literacy and the Workplace* (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Life Insurance, 1984), p. 23.

9. Robert W. Feagles, "Some Responses to the Literacy Problem: The Travelers Insurance Company" in *Functional Literacy in the Workplace*, pp. 42-43.

10. Mary L. Tenopyr, "Realities of Adult Literacy in Work Settings," (American Telephone and Telegraph Company unpublished report, undated), p. 16.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

12. Commission on Higher Education and the Adult Learner, "Adult Learners: Key to the Nation's Future" (Columbia, Maryland: November 1984), p. 5.

13. Tenopyr, "Realities of Adult Literacy in Work Settings," p. 17.

14. Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, *Action for Excellence*, p. 30.

15. Paul Simon, "Perspectives on Literacy: Illiteracy—The Cost to the Nation" in *Functional Literacy and the Workplace*, p. 15.

16. John E. Roueche, "Literacy Needs and Developments in American Community Colleges" (Austin, Texas: unpublished paper, undated), p. 4.

17. Commission on Higher Education and the Adult Learner, "Adult Learners," p. 4.

18. Telephone interview with Larry Simpson, director, Career Development Institute, Cleveland, Ohio, November 1984.

19. Robert Orr, quoted in the newsletter of the Business Council for Effective Literacy, Vol. 2, (January 1985), p. 4.

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Other Publications of the Northeast-Midwest Institute

The Budget and the Region: An Analysis of President Reagan's Fiscal 1986 Request (1985) $15.00

This analysis covers 16 major issue areas vital to the economic health of the 18-state region, including defense spending, energy, economic development, housing, employment and training, and business tax incentives. An economic outlook section discusses major trends to watch in the coming year.

The New American Unemployment: Appropriate Government Responses to Structural Dislocation (1985) $7.50
by Paula Duggan and Virginia Mayer

This report examines policy changes that could aid in the reabsorption of dislocated workers into the labor force. It proposes that the federal government become an "enabler" of state and community-based programs to provide workers with training opportunities, remedial education, job-search assistance, and labor market information. It also reviews successful programs sponsored by labor unions, companies, and public-private sector plans to mitigate the effects of plant closures and slowdowns on workers and their communities.

The Pentagon Tilt: Regional Biases in Defense Spending and Strategy (1985) $10.00
by Virginia Mayer

Defense spending patterns are analyzed in this report, which contains extensive statistical data. Numerous tables give state-by-state breakdowns for various types of military activities, including procurement, R&D, personnel, payroll, military construction, and installations. It discusses the president's proposed budget for fiscal 1986 and the direction of defense spending through fiscal 1989.

Partners in Growth: Business-Higher Education Development Strategies (1985) $5.00
by Peter Doyle and Candice Brisson

The first of six monographs analyzing options for policy makers at state and local levels and in the academic community to use their resources cooperatively for economic development.

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Mr. Woodside. Illiteracy obviously retards the individual. It also burdens the corporation and blemishes the image of equal opportunity in a democratic society.

But what I have described thus far is an end result of illiteracy. I applaud the programs that exist to provide remediation for a large number of adult illiterates, but I think our primary focus should be at another level. Specifically, I believe that both business and government must reaffirm their support of public education and join in efforts to improve the education of young people.

The businessman with an eye on the future, for example, will recognize that the traditional cream of the crop of young workers will not adequately meet future labor force demand in this country.

A continuation of current drop-out and illiteracy rates will mean a larger proportion of marginal or unacceptable new hires to choose from, and upgrading and revitalization of public schools now would be a strategic national investment for the 1990's.

The businessman with an eye on the future will also realize that our public schools are becoming increasingly populated with those young people who have historically been most dependent upon public education as their way out of the trap of poverty.

More than 25 percent of our public school population already is of minority origin, and the proportion of blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and native Americans in public schools continues to grow. Twenty-three of the largest school systems in the Nation are already majority-minority systems, and by the year 2000 1 of every 3 Americans will be black, Hispanic, or Asian.

The problem is not the growing percentages of minorities in our public schools; the problem, I submit, is the decline in our national commitment to public education which effectively deprives too many of our children of the opportunity for the economic and social advancement that was available to my generation.

The problems of adult illiteracy will continue to be with us until our public school systems reduce the number of graduates or dropouts they send into the ranks of adult illiterates. Dropout rates continue at unacceptably high levels, especially in urban areas and among minority youth. The social consequences of school failure are symbolized by the label "illiterate."

I believe that remedial and supplementary education programs should be available to help prevent the sense of failure which our young people feel. Preventive programs can help reconnect youth with their schools, their peers, and improve their own self-esteem.

One legislative example is a bill currently being sponsored by Congressmen Fish and Edgar, House bill 1722. It would appropriate funds for school systems to provide for a remedial education component in the youth summer jobs programs.

More important, though, there is a critical need for a broad-based, firm commitment to the quality and vitality of public education. There are signs, unfortunately, that economic conditions or demographic trends or political ideologies could foreclose the opportunities that exist. This should not go unchallenged.

I believe that a first-rate system of public education is every bit as important to our future as our national defense system, and I have yet to hear an argument that persuades me that we should not increase that portion of our GNP that we spend on public education.

I think we must put aside for good the idea that there is a cheap and easy solution lying around somewhere that will enable us to improve our schools without using more resources, or using resources differently, or changing the organization incentives embodied in our public schools.

I suggest that we view our educational programs and proposals for educational reforms as investments and that we focus attention on their future benefits as well as their immediate costs. For example, is it really in our national interest to turn away so many children eligible for Head Start programs because of the short-term costs? I think not.

Now, I would like to conclude with a comment about how businessmen work on behalf of public schools and help to fight the illiteracy we are talking about.

In my opinion, the business community needs to focus more of its support for our public schools within the political arena. This is where the major decisions are going to be made about the funds, the priorities, and the programs that will make or break our system of public education.

For example, the administration's tax proposal for ending the deductibility of State and local taxes will make it more expensive for taxpayers to support increased expenditures for our public schools. It's in our collective interest to make sure that any outcome of tax reform not undermine the ability of State and local governments to finance public school improvements.

For businesses concerned about public education and about illiteracy to be effective in the political arena will mean more than telling our lobbyists to put in a good word for public education every now and then. It will mean more than sending a corporate executive to Washington or to the State capitols for an occasional goodwill visit. It will mean organizing ourselves into an active, sustained, support mechanism on behalf of public education. It will mean building ad hoc coalitions that seek major and permanent improvements in such areas as teacher training and certification, in salary scales, in the educational standards for students, and in special programs for the disadvantaged.

Finally, it will mean actively acknowledging that preventing illiteracy means good public schools, good school buildings, good school libraries, and good schoolteachers. This will cost more of our money, require more of our time, and take more of our effort, but, like the saying goes, we can pay up now or pay up later at many times today's cost.

Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Mr. Woodside.

The Chair will make a statement later, but at this point I will ask the members of the committee to address their questions to the witness so that we may move on.

Senator Stafford, I will call on you first.

Chairman STAFFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Woodside, in regard to the new monograph released by the Northeast-Midwest Institute, could you describe some of the successful remediation programs administered or funded by corporations, public schools, community colleges, or 4-year colleges?

Mr. WOODSIDE. I can't speak with any conviction this morning, Senator. The report was released this morning, and I have seen it about as long as you have.

Chairman STAFFORD. I see.

Mr. WOODSIDE. So there isn't much that I can say except to say that there is a separate chapter on both the public commitments area and business programs that are going on.

I can talk a little bit about the business programs that are under way today. I suppose the largest of all, as you know, in basic education is AT&T's program which runs over some $6 million a year just to teach basic reading, writing, and calculating skills. Of course, they are also the largest employer of high school graduates in the United States today and have been historically. So this has been a long-term program with them.

I think the other kinds of companies that have active programs going are those technology companies that require additional skills even on their manufacturing floors and, oddly enough, the service industries that use large clerical labor forces but also have to be able to add, subtract, to write memorandums, and to deal effectively over the telephone. So you find most major insurance companies with educational training programs.

Chairman STAFFORD. Do you believe, Mr. Woodside, that business involvement in the literacy field has increased over the past several years?

Mr. WOODSIDE. I think so. If there was ever an area with soft statistics, I think this is it. My impression is that most businesses are doing more. I think most businesses, though, are sort of like my particular company at this point in time, where they are addressing some of the fallouts of the illiteracy.

We have health and safety programs that also involve a lot of teaching of just the ability to read signs and to understand what the instructions are rather than addressing the basic problem of illiteracy itself. But I think we are all moving in that direction.

Chairman STAFFORD. Thank you very much, Mr. Woodside, for the Senate subcommittee that's here. We appreciate all that you've done to bring this matter to the attention of the public and to us; we appreciate it.

Mr. WOODSIDE. Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Mr. Goodling.

Mr. GOODLING. I, too, Mr. Chairman, have a statement to make whenever we get around to that point.

Chairman HAWKINS. I thought at the conclusion of Mr. Woodside's testimony that we would do those little housekeeping functions.

Mr. GOODLING. Fine.

Mr. Woodside, I'm pleased to see that on page 3 of your testimony you say the businessman with an eye on the future will recognize that the traditional cream of the crop of young workers will not adequately meet future labor force demand.

What percentage of the business community has that eye on the future?

Mr. WOODSIDE. I can speak only with firm conviction about my own. On the other hand, since I am a member of the Business Higher Education Council Forum, there are many businesses that are directly now involved in the standards of education and seeing what can be done to improve them in all parts of the educational process, but I can't give you a percentage of those firms that are more interested today than they were 10 years ago.

Mr. GOODLING. I ask the question because, with 23 years in public education myself, we got an awful lot of criticism from the business community when it came to employing people who they said couldn't read, write, function properly, et cetera. We never really got their wholehearted support in trying to do anything about it.

The other question I would ask is, is there anything being done in the business community to educate the community in relationship to how do you attract the brightest and best to the teaching profession. For instance, if you are going to pay them $12,000, or how do we get them to the teaching profession before business people steal them?

In the ADEA, I always used to tell the chairman, we educated them just enough in math and science so that, as a matter of fact, the business community wanted to steal them, and did. They didn't really get back to help us in those areas.

Mr. WOODSIDE. You have to understand my background. I have taught, but I represent a large corporation, and large corporations, as you know, are bureaucratic, but not quite as bureaucratic as the education system, I think.

Part of what needs to be done, certainly in the school systems that I'm familiar with in Baltimore and in New York—I think a substantial lift to the whole attitude toward teaching will come with less of the enormous number of rules and regulations that are part of any large, complex school system today. The teacher has very little discretion in many, many areas that I think were not true when I was graduating from public high school. So I think that's one of the things.

Albert Shanker and I don't agree totally eye to eye on which comes first. It's sort of a chicken and egg problem, and we have spent a lot of time talking in New York about it. He is a very strong advocate now of teacher examinations, and my problem is, I guess, I say unless you raise the basic compensation level, the examinations aren't going to mean a thing if you are going to keep some flow of teachers coming into the system.

So I am doing, in a personal sense, everything I can to stimulate the action that is going on and to try and translate—I think at the latest count there have been 11 major reports on education, the teaching profession, standards, and the rest—into some kind of concrete action that will really produce some results rather than following the traditional American pattern of studying, analyzing, patting yourself on the back for doing such a good job, and then turning your back and walking away from the problem.

Mr. GOODLING. I just came back from Japan, and I told them, in relationship to their educational system, that it appears that they are now where we used to be. They want to go where we are, and we're planning to go back to where we were. It's rather interesting.

I have no other questions, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

The Chair will call on the members as they came into the room. Mr. Martinez, I think, was next.

Mr. **Martinez**. One time somebody asked me why I am such a strong supporter of education. I said, "Because I didn't get none." But, you know, I can look back at the problems I had when I entered into school. One, I was primarily Spanish-speaking when I entered kindergarten. They had a class there that they called—a complete misnomer, but it was bilingual education—they used to call it speech correction class.

It took a while for me to begin to comprehend. In that reference, my children have young friends who went through school but didn't get the same encouragement that my kids got at home, and, as a result, they had problems in their family lives, and that resulted in problems in schools.

One of the things that was evident to me is, the biggest problem they had was reading; they didn't know how to read. There was a young man graduating from high school, a senior, with my son, who did not know how to read—absolutely did not know how to read. It was unbelievable to me that he was graduating.

It wasn't because he was dumb, because this young man had a musical group, and he composed the music for them, and he could read and write music like you wouldn't believe. He has even had a song published since then. So it means that he had the wherewithal, but he just missed out somewhere.

I found, when my son entered into a special school, Don Bosco, which provided academic and vocational training through the high school years, I'd like to see more high schools like that, and I think the businesses would end up a lot better off if they had.

But to get him through there, we sent him to a speed reading course where he not only improved his speed reading but his comprehension also.

I'm wondering if you, in your experiences both as a teacher and in industry, find that the biggest problem we have with young people whom you consider illiterate is, they just don't understand reading, writing, comprehension—they don't have any comprehension of the English language—and if there isn't somewhere in the elementary years that we ought to just maybe focus in on those for whom it's a little more difficult to learn, they don't have as great a capacity at a younger age as some other kids do, and as a result they get left behind. What is your response to that?

To me, reading is the most important thing. If people are going to learn, they have to first be able to read.

Mr. **Woodside**. I can't pretend to the expertise that I think the panel members are going to have who will be following my presentation here this morning. That is one of the reasons that I mentioned in my speech what I think are the horrendous statistics around Head Start. We are only accepting 400,000 out of 3 million qualified applicants for Head Start programs because of lack of funds.

I think those are the kinds of programs that get people off to an early start and help to overcome some of the very things that you're talking about—language deficiencies—which make comprehension, obviously, almost impossible. So I think much more has to be done in the early years.

As a company, we have been focusing at the beginning on high schools. I think we are about to switch to the K through 6 school systems to see what we can do there and be imaginative about a corporation's dealing with a particular situation.

Mr. **Martinez**. I've heard that you don't throw money at situations to correct them, but certainly I believe that in education one of the big drawbacks is money. You touched a little bit on it—adequate salaries for teachers, that you get competent, qualified teachers.

But certainly in my communities, the business community has been taking a big interest in education, and, here again, like you just stated, on a high school level, and beginning to realize that you have to get them a lot earlier than that to really mold them into having good habits and attitudes.

Attitudes are very important, especially in low socioeconomic backgrounds. Attitudes are all important. There is a kind of theme that runs through a lot of those neighborhoods where people are at a low socioeconomic background that is almost what you would term a loser's attitude—you know, "Don't expect, because you don't have any right to; this is where you were born, and this is where you're going to stay"—and that's bad. Sometimes it's even in families, and you've got to overcome that.

But I think the schools can help to overcome that if they are recognizing that attitudes are a lot of the problem, and getting a kid into a positive attitude where he wants to learn, where he realizes that, through an effort on his part, he can achieve and he can accomplish.

Terrell Bell said once there's nothing as expressive as a student that learns he can learn. He also said that we all know how expensive ignorance can be, but I sometimes wonder if we really fully appreciate that statement that he made; I do; and I'm seeing that business communities are more and more, especially in my communities, becoming interested in education, because they realize that it's a benefit to them in the long run when they get a person who comes out that at least has those basic skills that will allow him to be trained by them.

Subsequently, I would say, how do you feel about somewhere along the line—because it still takes money—that the business community pay some kind of a tax or some kind of moneys into that educational system, since they are in the long run going to benefit by it?

Mr. **Woodside**. I think if the educational system could do the job that it is, I think, supposed to do and could do, that would be a cheaper route for businesses in general than the amount of money they are now paying in the remedial area of education.

One point I would like to make, because sometimes I think we are closely identified with what we prefer to call the Join-A-School Program but which in many communities is called Adopt-A-School, which to me has always sounded like kind of a putdown rather than a partnership.

One of the things that we have found that was a result of this partnership, in this case with an almost totally minority high school on the west side of New York City, was that the teachers felt that the greatest contribution we had made was to provide all kinds of options that their students really didn't know about. We suddenly got people very much interested in education.

We run a whole series—I won't bore you with all the details—of intern programs, and we supplement teachers' salaries for club activities, and we provide uniforms, and books, and manuals, and a whole lot of other things.

But we have really gotten that school excited, and the percentage, using the same system, that is now applying for colleges, being accepted—scholarship students, SAT scores have all risen dramatically, and this is all by raising the expectation level of the student body.

But that, while it's good and helpful, does not really replace a systematic policy dealing with teachers' salaries, teachers' training, proficiency, standards for students, and the rest, and those are big problems that still remain every place in the public education system.

Mr. **Martinez**. Thank you, Mr. Woodside. I certainly agree with you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Mr. Williams.

Mr. **Williams**. Thank you.

Mr. Woodside, good for you. Yours is a refreshing voice of logic at a time when we need that, not only on this issue of illiteracy, but many other public issues as well.

You say that, as many don't understand, there's no cheap or easy solution. Good for you.

You say—if I may quote you—"It's in our collective interest"—speaking of you and your colleagues, I assume—"to make sure that any outcome of tax reform not undermine the ability of State and local governments to finance public school improvement," and you say it means organizing ourselves into an active, sustained, support mechanism on behalf of public education, and you end by saying, "The answer is good public schools, and good public school buildings, and good school libraries, and good teachers." Good for you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **Woodside**. Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

Senator Simon.

Senator **Simon**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to be back in my old haunts, my old committee. I thank you, and I thank my colleague from Vermont for calling this joint hearing on literacy.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Paul Simon, a Senator from the State of Illinois follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. PAUL SIMON, A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

A woman brought home a gallon of Crisco for her family's dinner. She thought that she had bought the fried chicken that was pictured on the Crisco label. Because she could not read labels she had always bought groceries by looking at the pictures. Now she had enough Crisco to last a year, but no more money to go back and buy food for dinner.

This woman lived in Detroit but she could have been in any city, in any town. Earlier this year, the Department of Education estimated that 72 million adults in this country are functionally illiterate. Thirty million of these cannot write a check or read a "help-wanted" ad. The remaining millions can do these things only with difficulty. Adults who are illiterate do not advertise their inability, but though we may be unaware of it, more than one in three American adults cannot read. We are talking about a problem of crisis proportions.

Crises have their costs, and adult illiteracy costs taxpayers and businesses $20 billion every year. People who lack the basic skills necessary for employment get $6 billion in unemployment compensation and child welfare, not to mention the cost in lost income and tax revenue. Illiterate adults who are working cost their employers and the government billions in workers' compensation, damage to industrial equipment, and industrial insurance from the accidents they have because they can't read an operator's manual or understand a safety warning. The rate of illiteracy is twice as high in the prison population as in the general population, and the cost of crime, law enforcement, and incarceration related to illiteracy runs in the billions. Illiteracy may mortgage this country's economic future because, as former Secretary of Education Ted Bell has said, three-fourths of those who are currently unemployed lack the basic skills needed to retrain them for jobs that the changing economy will create.

The human costs of illiteracy that we can't quantify compel us to give our attention to this problem. People who can't read can't know if their gas bills are accurate. Millions of middle-aged and older Americans whose basic skills were once adequate for day-to-day living lack the skills to cope with the complexities of today. Parents who can't help their kids with school work set up the possibility of illiteracy that is passed from generation to generation.

This problem that Americans have neglected for so long has been successfully addressed around the globe. It is unacceptable that the U.S. ranks 49th in the world in literacy, behind countries like Cuba and Nicaragua. It is time we addressed our literacy problem. We need to look at federal programs like Adult Basic Education and others, to see how we can make them more effective. We need to examine the elementary and secondary school system, to see why some children can go through so many years of school only to emerge as illiterate adults. We need to harness the increasing interest of the business community and volunteer organizations, so that when they ask how they can become involved in the literacy effort they can receive a coherent response that encourages them to commit themselves and makes their commitment as effective as possible. In short, we need to give a serious and comprehensive problem our most serious and comprehensive efforts.

Today's joint hearing, the first in a series of five hearings, gives us a change to listen to experts who research literacy issues or work out in the field. It is my hope that by listening to their testimony we will increase our awareness and understanding of the problem and commit ourselves to addressing it.

Senator SIMON. I want to commend you, Mr. Woodside. I was not here for your statement, but I have read it, and I've heard your responses. It shows a vision and an understanding that we need in business, we need in Government, and we need all over.

If I may, Monday morning I was in a meeting with Frank Considine, who is the chief executive officer of National Can—if you will forgive me for mentioning a competitor—and it strikes me as ironic that the two big can companies of this country are providing the kind of foresight and understanding in the field of education that we ought to be getting from Government leaders, from education leaders, from many, many others.

Here we have a problem that we now hide like we used to hide mental retardation; we used to put people in the closet.

One of the things that I did when I was a Member of the House, when I had my open office hours, when people came in one at a time with Social Security or whatever their problems were—when they came in and said, "I'm desperate for a job," I learned to ask one question first: "Can you read and write?" and when there was that awkward moment of silence, I knew what the answer was going to be.

We ought to take that problem out of the closet. We ought to attack it vigorously. It would be the best investment we could make as a country in our future.

I have no questions, I just wish to commend you. I'm going to follow American Can on the New York Stock Exchange. Any company that has the vision and the good sense to have a CEO like you has to be a company with a bright future.

Mr. **Woodside**. Thank you very much.

Senator **Simon**. Thank you.

Let me add, my investments are very, very modest. [Laughter.]

Chairman **Hawkins**. We'll can it then.

Mr. Woodside, I think you've answered some of the questions that I had. Let me just simply confine it to one.

You have indicated in your statement that there is a cost to the business sector that either we'll pay now or much later we'll pay a lot more than what we would pay now. You treat doing something about the problem as an investment.

In view of those statements, are you saying, in effect, that in terms of a deficit reduction, shortchanging education today, increasing thereby illiteracy, is a bad investment and that actually not voting for the type of programs that you indicated now would, in effect, cause an increase in the budget deficit rather than a reduction?

Mr. **Woodside**. Is that the only alternative you're presenting me with?

Chairman **Hawkins**. No; you may dwell on it as you see fit. I wish there were some others.

Mr. **Woodside**. I feel rather strongly about the deficit. My tradeoff would be somewhat different than education and the deficit. It would probably be education and defense.

But I think in terms of the dollars we're talking about, we're not talking about massive sums of money. I'm as worried about commitment as I am about the money that we're spending. We're being driven by the demographics that lie ahead of us. Less than 18 percent of the adults in this country have a child in the school system, and that number is going to be dropping steadily, as we are watching it now in colleges and as we are beginning to watch it in the lower K through 3 grades in public schools.

This means that local communities are going to be fighting to—at least that 82 percent of the adults that don't have children in the public school system are not going to be anxiously sponsoring increases in their educational costs and therefore their taxes. I do worry about that, and it's a problem I don't really know how to solve.

The most successful cases have been done by finding a coalition that's effective in both raising money and causing some changes in the system itself. I suppose the most successful has been that in California, where they raise an enormous new amount of tax designated to be spent only in the educational area and, at the same time, set up new standards for teaching and new salary guides and the rest of the things, so that it was really a whole package that was a joint effort by communities and businessmen in that State. But it took a major upheaval to do it and was really a result of the tax actions they took on property taxes 10 years earlier. But it is possible to be done, and we can begin to look at coalitions.

My own feeling is that, from a community standpoint, looking at the fact that I think public schools are always going to be basically funded by the State and local governments, I still think the Federal Government has a very key role in helping to establish standards.

I think that great progress can be made with a great deal of energy, commitment, and not a great amount of money in these next few years.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you very much.

Are there any further questions?

[No response.]

Chairman HAWKINS. If not, Mr. Woodside, again, we commend you and congratulate you as a business person for your very enlightened point of view. As Senator Simon said, we just wish there were many more of you. Certainly we appreciate your appearance. This will not be the last time; we'll keep up with you.

Mr. WOODSIDE. All right. Thank you very much.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

At this time, we will dispose of a few statements that were not made earlier. The Chair has a statement, which I will ask to be printed in the record. I will not read it at this time. I will read only the last paragraph which attempts to describe why we have these hearings.

Certainly I want to express my personal appreciation to Senator Stafford, who chairs the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities, for agreeing to meet with the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education, who felt that this would be the most economical and most efficient way of dealing with the subject. I think that's certainly part of the purpose of these hearings. We think that they can accomplish a great deal.

First of all, they can certainly call attention to this serious problem. Second, we feel that the hearings can pull together a body of research, information, and recommendations concerning the nature, extent, and causes of illiteracy, and deal with the successful approaches and the possible solutions.

Finally, we hope that these hearings will begin to forge a bipartisan consensus to discuss an appropriate Federal response, which we would hope we can perhaps conclude in the spring of next year in time for us to act upon some initiatives that may come out of these hearings.

The Chair will stand on those purposes, and I hope that we can accomplish at least substantially most of them.

[The opening statement of Hon. Augustus Hawkins follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. AUGUSTUS F. HAWKINS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

This morning the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities and the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education are conducting a joint hearing on the problem of illiteracy in America. This is the first time in many years that our two Subcommittees have come together for a hearing, but the gravity of the problem facing us warrants extraordinary concern. I commend Sen. Stafford for his interest in this joint venture and the cooperation he has extended us.

The quest for universal literacy is one of the goals upon which our school system and our nation was built. By many measures we have made remarkable progress toward this goal over the past two centuries. We have developed the most extensive and sophisticated system of public education in the world. Three quarters of our students graduate from high school, compared with 8% in 1910. The 1980 Census tells us we have achieved 99% literacy. This, however, is misleading.

As our society has changed over two centuries, so have our expectations and needs. The census definition of literacy—completing 6 years of school or being able to read and write a simple message—is no longer an appropriate measure of literacy in a world of high technology, sophisticated defense systems, and global economics. Thus, a new concept of literacy has arisen which considers the ability of an individual to function effectively in society.

The number of adults in the United States who are functionally illiterate is large and growing. Estimates of this population range from 23 to 72 million. An estimated 2.3 million persons join these ranks each year. About the same number—2.3 million—are reached altogether by government and voluntary programs. So we are running just to keep standing still.

These functionally illiterate adults include the young and elderly; dropouts and graduates; immigrants and native-born; poor and well-off. The diversity of the population makes the problem of illiteracy that much more complex. Different people have different literacy goals: some want to learn enough to get a job; others to achieve high school diploma equivalency; others to acquire English language skills; and others to be able to help their children in school.

Illiteracy is expensive. Fifty percent of prisoners are illiterate; the annual cost of their imprisonment is estimated at $6 billion. A survey of corporations led to an estimated cost of $10 billion in remedial programs in reading, writing, and math for employees. The American Library Association calculates the cost of functional illiteracy among adults at $224 billion annually, in terms of welfare payments, crime, job incompetence, lost taxes, and remedial education. In addition, our national defense becomes compromised when service personnel cannot understand military technology. Our democracy suffers when individuals cannot make rational and informed choices.

The price paid by individuals is as great or greater, especially when illiteracy is perpetuated through generations.

Many programs exist to address illiteracy and its consequences. In the Federal government alone we have the Adult Education Act, the Job Training Partnership Act, the Vocational Education Act, the refugee education programs, veterans' programs, and Department of Defense basic skill training programs. State and local governments have developed programs, as have libraries, community based organizations, and volunteer groups. Many of these programs are very successful. But even with all these efforts together, we are reaching only a small percentage of the target population.

These hearings, in my opinion, can accomplish several purposes. First, they can call attention to this serious problem. Second, the hearings can pull together a body of research, information, and recommendations concerning the nature, extent, and causes of illiteracy, successful approaches, and possible solutions. Finally, I hope these hearings will begin to forge a bipartisan consensus to discuss an appropriate Federal response.

We plan to continue these joint hearings on October 1 and 3.

I have introduced an "Even Start" bill. I've been trying since I've been here to get rid of the term "Head Start." It's a bad term. If you're in the business of public education, you realize that all the parents whose children aren't allowed to participate in Head Start think that the youngsters who are participating are getting a head start, and that isn't what we're trying to do at all; we're trying to give them an even start.

But I have introduced a bill, which I believe we'll talk about in September, dealing with this whole idea of intergenerational illiteracy, because I think unless we attack the two together we're just not going to be successful.

My colleagues on the House side have heard me say many times the best use of title I money that I ever was involved in was taking title I money and going out into the homes of 3- and 4-year-olds and working with the children and their parents at the same time.

It's criminal that we have so many families who could do the kind of things that have to be done in order to get a child ready to read before the child comes to school, but they don't take the time to do it.

But when you think of these 25–60 million illiterate adults, you're talking about parents who don't know what to do, who want to do something to help their child become ready to read, but they don't know what to do.

In my bill, we try to set up some pilot programs where we can bring the two together and work on the problem with parents involved as well as children. I really believe that's the only way we'll solve that problem.

The unfortunate part about that program—I had to fight the school board all the time because their children couldn't participate in that program; and therefore the school board wasn't very much interested in the program. I understand that the minute I left the program disappeared also.

But when you saw those parents and the enthusiasm that they had and they showed because they, too, were becoming part of the educational system and for the first time knew how to participate and were learning all of the things that they had to learn in order to help their children at home, it was a great thing to see.

If I could go back and now do a statistical study, I would imagine that we did, as a matter of fact, break the cycle in some of those cases, and that's what it should be all about.

So I hope that this hearing, realizing that we have a lot of dedicated people who are testifying before us, who are working as volunteers, as business people, to try to combat probably the greatest problem facing us—if you're from a farm community, you might say that's the greatest problem facing us, but I think illiteracy is the greatest problem facing us in relationship to our future.

So I look forward to not only participating in this but then to move ahead with some innovative ideas as to how we might attack the problem and, as a matter of fact, solve the problem. It's going to take the entire community in order to do something about illiteracy. It's much bigger than the Congress of the United States. We'll look forward to a total cooperative effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you, Mr. Goodling.

Mr. Williams, I think you had a statement.

Mr. **Williams**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman—both chairmen.

Mr. Goodling, I liked that quote from the Office of Education.

My favorite quote about education I believe was from Mark Twain. He said, "The schools aren't as good as they used to be, but then again," he said, "I guess they never were." That says a lot about our criticism of American education sometimes.

In my four terms on this committee, I've become alarmed at the cost to society and to individuals because of illiteracy. I've introduced a couple of bills; I'm working on a couple more; I hope to present them as a package along, Mr. Goodling, with your good efforts, to see if we can't really develop some strategies at the Federal level for doing what we can to attack this problem which is creating two Americas. Before this century is out—just 15 years—this country will be a much different place than it is today if we do not stem this wave of illiteracy that is sweeping over the United States.

Illiteracy is America's shame and our national tragedy. It's a waste for those individuals who are illiterate, a drag on our economy, a danger to our defense, and a block on our democracy. It's a waste for individuals who cannot read a newspaper or the directions on a medicine bottle or correctly fill out a check.

It's a drag on our economy. I worry about that as a member of the Budget Committee, particularly in these waning days before the recess.

This Nation spends $6,600 million a year to keep 750,000 illiterate people in jail. The annual cost of welfare programs and unemployment compensation due to illiteracy is estimated to be an additional $6 billion a year.

An informed guess—which, obviously, is the best we can do—is that the price tag for efforts by the business community to address the lack of basic skills in their work force is $10 billion a year.

Author Jonathan Kozol, in his new book, says the total cost, as best he can determine, is that America pays $100 billion a year directly related to illiteracy.

America's standing in international competition is being significantly eroded by illiteracy here at home, and that's something that we have to strategize together about, my friends. If we're going to properly compete in the international marketplace, our people have to be the best and brightest, and we're creating two Americas with about half not the best and brightest.

I said it was a danger to our defense because, as many of you know, many of our soldiers can't even begin the training they need to handle sophisticated military equipment. The Department of Defense is now paying $1,000 a page to convert weapons manuals into comic books so the GI's can understand them—$1,000 a page. A well prepared defensive force—we all worry about it; we all want to achieve it. A well prepared defensive force requires well educated adults at all levels, top to bottom, throughout the military.

Finally, I said it's a blot on our democracy. This is an experiment. We're trying to determine whether people can rule themselves and do it better than the brightest king or prince that ever lived.

Americans have inately understood the importance of education, because we came here as a ragtag bunch, and we knew that if we were to compete we had to be well educated. If we were to improve ourselves, we had to count on our schools to bring us up to the level where we could do it correctly.

Having a significant percentage of our people unable to properly take part in this experiment is a terrible scar on this democracy. So it is a national shame, and this Congress today must commit itself to develop a stragegy to end it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you, Mr. Williams.

Mr. Martinez.

Mr. **Martinez**. It's something that Mr. Woodside said that brings me to make this statement, and that was when he referred to "commitment," because it really takes a commitment.

I can remember that our commission that was studying the problems in our schools—the Commission on Excellence I believe it was described as—came up with a report that called our Nation at risk.

I hate to think that our Nation is really at risk with the resources we have, but I think that it can be a nation at risk if we don't commit—and that's the word, "commit."

I'll never forget the day that you, Mr. Chairman, were presenting the Education Act on the floor, and in trying to demonstrate the minimal amount of money that was expended on education versus the amount of money that we spent on defense, you referred to two of our colleagues from California and the different appropriations they had voted for when one was always calling the other a big spender.

You asked the question tantamount to, who is the big spender, considering what they vote for—social and domestic programs versus defense?

I thought to myself that probably you were the bigger spender of the two because you believe in a strong, well equipped, militarily equipped country for strong national defense, but you also believe in a healthy and well educated America, one that's not hungry for food or hungry for jobs or standing in bread lines, like they were during the last depression.

But I think you, more than anyone else, are really committed to the excellence in our schools, which is what the commission was trying to point out that we needed to do.

I remember the one colleague, the next day, rose to the floor in the well to defend himself, and he said—and I quote—"The only reason for the Federal Government's existence at all is to provide for the common defense."

I would suggest to him that the common defense means many different things, and part of that common defense is a well educated and healthy people with domestic tranquility here at home.

But more than that, I think that those people that believe that the only reason for the existence of the Federal Government is for the common defense fool themselves, and they don't read the preamble to the Constitution completely, because it says that we are required, in the Constitution, to do other things. One of those things is education.

So I would simply say that we need to make that commitment. The same commitment we make to defense we need to make to education, and, in doing that, I think we'll solve a lot of the problems we have.

Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

The Chair would like to announce the next panel, consisting of Mrs. Elliot Richardson, chairman of the board, Reading is Fundamental; she is accompanied by Ruth Graves, president, Reading is Fundamental; Dr. John C. Manning, professor of education at the University of Minnesota, president of the International Reading Association; and Mrs. Monika Sullivan, an adult basic education student of the Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia; she is accompanied by Mrs. Helen Whelen, Learning Center coordinator and placement counselor for Fairfax County Adult and Community Education.

Will those witnesses please be seated at the table?

May I be forgiven if I make one personal reference?

Mrs. Richardson, those of us who knew Elliot Richardson are delighted to have you with us today because we had a great admiration and respect for your husband, and certainly we're delighted to see you today; it reminds us of the great service that he performed when he was in Washington and elsewhere and subsequent to his leaving Washington. So it is a delight to have you among the others present this morning.

Mrs. **Richardson**. Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Senator Stafford.

Chairman **Stafford**. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to be associated with what you have just said and also claim Elliot and Mrs. Richardson as fellow New Englanders. So we're very happy you're here.

Mrs. **Richardson**. Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

We will call on the witnesses in the order in which they were presented, Mrs. Elliot Richardson being the first one.

STATEMENTS OF MRS. ELLIOT RICHARDSON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, READING IS FUNDAMENTAL, ACCOMPANIED BY RUTH GRAVES, PRESIDENT, READING IS FUNDAMENTAL; JOHN C. MANNING, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, AND PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION; AND MONIKA SULLIVAN, ADULT BASIC EDUCATION STUDENT, FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, VA, ACCOMPANIED BY HELEN WHELAN, LEARNING CENTER COORDINATOR AND PLACEMENT COUNSELOR, FAIRFAX COUNTY ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Mrs. **Richardson**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman—both chairmen. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on a situation that we all agree threatens our health, not just our economic health but our health as a democratic society.

We are very grateful—all of us—that these committees are addressing the issue and hope that in your deliberations you will give serious consideration to the prevention of illiteracy as well as its treatment.

I have in my written testimony some of the distressing facts which have been so eloquently portrayed here both by Mr. Woodside and by members of both committees this morning, and I'm certainly not going to burden you with more.

We do have a somewhat different figure than the one used by Mr. Williams that the Coalition on Literacy added up the costs of illiteracy annually to be $225 billion per year, and this figure was also used by the Department of Education in a recent report on the Library Services and Construction Act.

The adult literacy efforts are working valiantly to help grown people open the doors now closed to them because they cannot read. Though excellent, these efforts alone cannot solve the problem.

According to current estimates, the number of functionally illiterate adults in this country is increasing by 2¼ million people each year. In order to break into this vicious circle, we must not overlook the 67 million young people under 18 growing up in America. Unless we take preventive measures, too many will add to the already alarming illiteracy statistics.

Experts have said that the current generation is the first in our Nation's history to grow up less skilled in reading and writing than their parents. Thirteen percent of all 17-year-olds in this country can already be considered functionally illterate. Eighty-five percent of the juveniles who appear before courts are functionally illiterate, and, as has been pointed out here this morning, one-third of our young people drop out of high school before graduation.

What can we do to prevent our young people from becoming grim statistics of tomorrow?

We certainly endorse Mr. Woodside's statement on the need for a commitment. From my own work in the literacy field for the last 16 years, I have learned that several factors are essential to preventing illiteracy. The first is motivation—awakening in young people the desire to read and to learn.

Although motivation comes from within, it can be sparked from without. In Reading Is Fundamental, we have seen previously disinterested youngsters become avid readers through programs such as ours and the efforts of caring parents and concerned citizens.

Reading is a skill, and, like other skills, it improves with practice. Extensive reading also quickens the capacity to think, to write, and to use verbal skills clearly and effectively.

According to a survey reported in Science '82, Fortune 500 executives rate communication skills as the top priority of business leadership—we have certainly heard that reiterated here this morning—even more essential than financial, marketing, and technical know-how. These executives are well aware that American businesses lose billions of dollars each year because so many employees don't know how to read, write, or think.

The thousands of youngsters who write to RIF each year thank us again and again for helping them to discover that reading is fun. What they call fun is the ingredient that propels them to read. It is fun with a serious purpose and proven results.

The second element involves parents, a child's first and most influential teachers. Even before children go off to school, parents can nurture an interest in reading by reading aloud to them, by providing a wide variety of books in the home, and by reading themselves. Mr. Goodling has cited the importance of this aspect, and we certainly agree very strongly with it.

Since its inception in 1966, Reading Is Fundamental has emphasized the essential role parents play in their children's development as readers. Parents are strong supporters of our programs. Nearly 40 percent of our 98,000-plus volunteers are parents, and the deluge of mail we have received in recent months indicates that parents, even those who have difficulty reading, are eager to help their children.

This year, some 40,000 parents have written to RIF for guidance and suggestions, and we have developed publications to help answer these needs.

The third essential element in preventing illiteracy is to ensure that children have an abundant supply of books. If motivated to read and free to choose what interests them, youngsters will read and continue to read, gradually building skills that are crucial to effective communication.

For almost 20 years, these three elements—motivation, parent involvement, and an abundant supply of reading materials—have helped Reading Is Fundamental to reach millions of young people and to turn them into readers.

A recent NIE study, which has been cited here and is in your testimony, "Becoming A Nation Of Readers," underscored the soundness of RIF's preventive approach.

Our future as a democracy is in the hands of our young people. We simply must provide that ounce of prevention that will assure that they grow up reading. We need strong reading programs in our schools, we need to help parents to help their children, we need to surround our young people with books in their schools, their community libraries, and their homes, and we need the kind of visibility for the problem of illiteracy that this committee is providing.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Congress and, in particular, these two subcommittees on behalf of the millions of children who have been reached by our services through the inexpensive book distribution program. Your sustained support has helped these youngsters to become enthusiastic readers who will grow up to be literate citizens.

Thank you very much for inviting me to testify.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Elliot L. Richardson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MRS. ELLIOT L. RICHARDSON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, READING IS FUNDAMENTAL, INC.

Mr. Chairman, Members of Congress, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on a situation that threatens our economic health, our military preparedness, and even the democratic foundations of our country—the problem of illiteracy.

We are grateful that the committees are addressing the issue and hope that in their deliberations they will give serious consideration to the prevention of illiteracy. Our experience shows that this matter is of great concern to the public.

The members of this committee are well aware of the distressing facts that one in five American adults is functionally illiterate, that costs related to illiteracy exceed $225 billion annually, and so on.

Adult literacy efforts are working valiantly to help grown people open the doors now closed to them because they cannot read. Though excellent, these efforts cannot solve the problem alone.

According to current estimates, the number of functionally illiterate adults in this country is increasing by some 2¼ million each year.

In order to break into this vicious circle, we must not overlook our young. There are 67 million young people under age 18 growing up in America. Unless we take preventive measures, too many will add to the already alarming illiteracy statistics:

Experts have said that the current generation is the first in our nation's history to grow up less skilled in reading and writing than their parents;

13% of all 17-year-olds in this country can already be considered functionally illiterate, though they are not yet counted as adults;

85% of the juveniles who appear before the courts are functionally illiterate; and

Nearly one-third of our nation's young people drop out of high school before graduation; among inner city minority youth, drop-out rates often exceed 50%.

What can we do to prevent our young people from becoming the grim statistics of tomorrow? From my work in literacy programs for the last 16 years, I have learned that several factors are essential to preventing illiteracy.

The first is motivation—awakening in young people the desire to read and to learn. Although motivation is often regarded as something within, it can be sparked from without. We in Reading Is Fundamental have seen previously disinterested youngsters become avid readers through programs such as ours and the efforts of caring parents and concerned citizens.

Reading is a skill. Like other skills, it improves with practice. Extensive reading also quickens the capacity to think, to write, and to use verbal skills clearly and effectively.

According to a survey reported in Science 1982, Fortune 500 executives rate communication skills as "the top priority for business leadership"—even more essential than financial, marketing, and technical know-how.

These executives are well aware that American businesses lose billions of dollars each year because so many employees don't know how to read, write, or think clearly and effectively.

The thousands of youngsters who write to RIF each year thank us again and again for helping them discover that reading is "fun." What they call "fun" is the ingredient that propels them to read. It is fun with a serious purpose and proven results.

The second element involves parents, a child's first and most influential teachers. Even before children go off to school, parents can nurture interest in reading by reading aloud to them, by providing a wide variety of books in the home, and by reading themselves.

Since its inception in 1966, RIF has emphasized the essential role parents play in their children's development as readers. Parents' strong support of RIF programs—nearly 40% of RIF's more than 98,000 volunteers are parents—and the deluge of mail we have received in recent months indicate that parents, even those who have difficulty reading, are eager to help their children. This year, some 40,000 parents have written to RIF for guidance and suggestions. RIF has developed publications to answer these needs.

The third essential element in preventing illiteracy is to ensure that children have an abundant supply of books. If motivated to read and free to choose what interests them, youngsters will read and continue to read, gradually building skills that are crucial to effective communication.

For almost 20 years, these three elements—motivation, parent involvement, and an abundant supply of reading materials—have helped Reading Is Fundamental reach millions of young people and turn them into readers. The recent NIE study, "Becoming a Nation of Readers," underscored the soundness of RIF's preventive approach.

Our future as a democracy is in the hands of our young people. We simply must provide the ounce of prevention that will assure that they grow up reading.

We need strong reading programs in our schools.

We need to help parents help their children.

We need to surround our young people with books, in their schools, their community libraries, and in their homes.

And we need the kind of visibility for the problem of illiteracy that this committee provides.

Thank you for inviting me to testify.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you, Mrs. Richardson.

The next witness is Dr. John C. Manning, professor of education at the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Manning.

Dr. **Manning**. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities, and the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education, I am John Manning, professor of education at the University of Minnesota and president of the International Reading Association.

Our association is a society of over 60,000 members and 1,180 affiliate councils in the 36 nations interested in reading, reading education, and the promotion of literacy.

My involvement in reading and literacy encompasses classroom teaching, teacher education, program development, university teaching, parent involvement, and the development and testing of instructional materials. I am, however, primarily interested in the teaching of reading to beginning reading instructors and the teaching of reading to children who have severe problems in learning to read.

I thank you most sincerely for the opportunity to testify here today on this vital subject crucial to our Nation's well-being and security.

My written testimony is part of the record of this hearing. I would like to very briefly comment on some issues that I think are of major import to the deliberations of this particular forum.

First of all, I think that any discussion related to literacy needs to be placed in what I might term the literacy environment in which we live. We are primarily now in an environment where communication is visual. That is, the motion picture, the television, the videotape are the primary means by which many, many of our adults and young citizens get their information.

I think within the last year we have seen some instances, particularly in the communication media of television, where the Nation's interests were highlighted perhaps in a way that needs further scrutiny.

What I'm indicating is the reality to which television and the other forms of visual communication can, in fact, influence not only the thinking of a citizenry but indeed the direction and the policies of a nation and republic. This distresses me more than other factors, primarily as this relates to a society that seems to be coming increasingly illiterate.

Without the balance of the written word and the wisdom and reflection which the written word allows, the visual media can, unbridled, become a communication media which needs additional governmental scrutiny. We are in that particular literary environment, in my view, now.

We have an increase in our technological process in both the physical sciences and medicine. That technological progress, and in other areas of the physical sciences, to me, brings with it many moral and ethical problems which, it seems to me, a literate society needs to address.

Here again, I think that history has indicated that the written word and reflection upon the written word can give individual citizens and certainly the literate adult that reflection and that scrutiny that allow us to make those moral and ethical decisions that are appropriate to us as individuals and are appropriate to our families and are appropriate to the societies in which we live.

Additionally, we have a growing population of citizens who cannot read. That data has been documented here over and over again, and I shall not bore you further.

We have, however, equally distressing and more debilitating, I believe, a faster growing population of children and adolescents who choose not to read. The data which comes from the report on becoming a nation of readers indicates very, very clearly that the majority of time which children spend in school is not in reading at all, and the fact of the matter is, the extremely limited amount of time which children do in fact spend in reading in schools—which, I might add, may very well be the last sanctuary for any kind of reading in our society—is, to me, appalling or distressing—5 or 10 minutes per day, for example, depending upon the grade level of investigation.

It seems to me that schools ought to be, or create at least, a literary environment that is more substantial in terms of time than that. That report also has some recommendations based upon those particular statistics.

So I think we do have some major problems in the area of illiteracy and literacy development in this nation.

If I might just transpose for a moment, however, the observations of Dickens in "A Tale of Two Cities" and give them in the reverse order, it was the worst of times, but perhaps again it is the best of times.

I think, first of all, that there are some immediate solutions, or at least possibilities for solutions, to our existing problems in the area of illiteracy. I would propose that there would be established a literacy corps which would be primarily developed in consortium with the public schools and the colleges of teacher education to forcefully address the existing problems of illiterates or potential illiterate adults in this Nation. This is particularly true, and I am delighted to hear from Congressman Goodling, because I believe very, very directly and forcefully that unless that cycle of the illiterate parent and the illiterate child is broken, we will make very little progress in terms of becoming a nation of readers. That is a crucial issue.

Unless school—and, what I am proposing here, a literacy corps by whatever nomenclature so designated—can address that major social issue, we will make no substantial progress in the schools, in my view. It is a parental home problem just as much as it is a school problem.

Second, I believe that this literacy corps, also because of, I believe, who we are as a people and what we represent, could very well provide a model and an example for similar literacy corps in other parts of the world, particularly as this relates to Third World countries where illiteracy is extremely, appallingly high.

I believe that we can resolve our illiteracy problems here in the United States that exist in every major American city, that exist to a marked degree in the rural South, that exist in the great San Joaquin Valley in California and parts of Texas. I think we can resolve those problems with commitment and resources.

I believe that we have, in addition to that, the potential for at least attempting to resolve many of the major problems which exist in other parts of the world by virtue of the fact that we have done so with our own citizens and our own people.

The long-range solutions, however, are a little bit more complex. We do need, in fact, as Mr. Woodside suggests, to dramatically improve the quality of our schools. I believe that a major step in that direction is a dramatic change in the teacher training programs that we have in existence today. I think that we have major problems in the area of teacher education, particularly as it relates to the methodological and/or technical preparation of those teachers.

In my view, the major problem which we have in this country related to our inability to teach children how to read is the inability of teachers technically and methodologically to teach those children how to read. Our problems are not in motives, our problems are not in direction, our problems are in our instructional incapacity, and unless and until our teacher education programs work in concert and much more closely with our public school practices, again, we will make no significant improvements in our teacher education programs.

I support most enthusiastically the observation of James Conan made almost 25 years ago in the education of the American teacher. The colleges of teacher education need to move much more closely to the public schools, and we need to have the courses in methodology and teacher education programs taught in the public schools, which is where they belong; the methods courses need to be moved out of the colleges and into the schools and, may I also say, the education professors along with them. Unless and until that occurs, we will have no significant improvement in the quality of our preservice programs.

Lastly, and with your indulgence, coming here to Washington and sitting in this forum, I am always overwhelmed and, indeed, in awe of the complexity of our society and in the needs of our society, but if we can learn from the historians, Gibbon, McCauley, De Tocqueville, Santayana, Spier, there have been those societies before us that have had equal technological advances and improvements, and unfortunately their national policies and directions have not been in that direction; their people have suffered; there has been ignorance; there have been inhumanities; there has been prejudice and violence and war. There have been societies before ours that have had those same technological improvements; and, indeed, they have made the right decisions; they have established the correct national priorities; they have brought peace to our world; they have taught their people; there has been economic stability; there have been strong family structures; there has been a vision that indeed this can be a better world.

If I may quote one of the very famous American poets—and I trust with the indulgence of Senator Stafford—Robert Frost, "Two roads diverged in the woods; and I, I took the one less traveled by; and that has made all the difference."

As I traveled about the world this year under the auspices of the International Reading Association, I met with leaders of countries in Basel, Switzerland, in 1984; San Jose, Costa Rica, in Central and South America in 1986; in Hong Kong from Asia and other Third World countries; Ireland again in Europe in 1985. I will go into Seoul next week to meet again with leaders in Southeast Asia.

If there is one thing that I have learned in talking with these leaders in the area of literacy throughout the world, it is this: that there is an inexorable link that exists between literacy and freedom, that a nation that is literate is a nation that is free.

Among our Founding Fathers, that was said most emphatically by Thomas Jefferson who, in the early days of this republic, cautioned that a nation that is illiterate deserves the government which it gets.

I thank you for allowing me this testimony.

[The statement of Dr. Manning follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN C. MANNING, PH.D., ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and the Humanities and the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education, I am John Manning, Professor of Education at the University of Minnesota and President of the International Reading Association. The International Reading Association is a professional society of over 60,000 members and 1,180 affiliate councils in 36 nations interested in reading, reading education and the promotion of literacy. My involvement in reading and literacy encompasses classroom teaching, teacher education, program development, university teaching, parent involvement and the development and testing of instructional materials. I thank you for the opportunity to testify here today on this vital subject, crucial to our nation's well-being and security.

Illiteracy is a problem of national scope, a problem which affects every citizen in very concrete ways. It is a problem involving people and their productivity, their education, their intellectual fulfillment, their health and their safety. In a very real sense, it is an issue bearing on the very security of our nation. It is, furthermore, a complex problem which will not yield to simplistic solutions. Only sustained efforts at many levels—national, state, local and individual—will result in higher levels of literacy for all.

Estimates of the magnitude of illiteracy in this land vary considerably. Most researchers agree that illiteracy affects millions of adult Americans. Figures approximating 10% of the adult population are commonly cited. These figures vary depending on the specific definition of illiteracy being used at the time. Functional illiteracy has usually been described as existing when an individual has completed fewer than eight years of schooling and does not have the ability to complete everyday reading activities with a minimal degree of ease and accuracy.

It is also difficult to make comparisons between the illiteracy rate now and that of previous years, since the demands on readers have increased considerably as the society has increased in technological sophistication. What was sufficient reading ability in past decades does not serve today's reader well as he or she seeks to make a contribution in an increasingly complex society. What is agreed upon by everyone is that adult illiteracy is a very substantial problem affecting large numbers of individuals in every segment of our society.

Related to the difficulty of reaching consensus on definitions of illiteracy are similar difficulties in the delineation of clear national goals in this area. During the decade of the Sixties, reading was viewed by national policy makers as a right (as in the federally sponsored Right to Read program) whereas in the Seventies it was viewed more from the perspective of a skill (as exemplified by the emphasis on basic skills and functional literacy). Recent national reports have reinforced the impression that young adults have not learned to read well enough and that, as a nation, we need to do something about the situation. This problem of goals and definitions may have been a hindrance to the development and implementation of a coherent and effective national effort.

In my testimony today, I will seek to respond to your letter of invitation to testify in which you ask for a focus on the problems of defining literacy, input on developing adequate and meaningful statistics and information on the costs of illiteracy to society, on recommended approaches to the problem and on the appropriate Federal response to the problems associated with illiteracy. I will begin by addressing the topic of definitions and related statistics on the maginitude of the problem.

DEFINITIONS AND STATISTICS

Definitions of literacy and estimates of the magnitude of the problem vary greatly, according to the source referred to. Depending on which statistic you read, you might believe that illiteracy is out of control or that it is a problem of much smaller magnitude. For example, one commonly used definition of literacy has been the ability to read at about the fourth grade level. In 1900, according to the definition then used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the illiteracy rate in the United States was 11.3% of the adult population. By 1980, using the same definition, the rate would be 0.5% of the adult population. However, standards have changed and a higher level of reading skill is essential even to function minimally in our present society.

Northcutt reported in the Adult Performance Level study (1975) and 23 million adult Americans were functionally illiterate. His work defined literacy as being the application of communications, computation, problem-solving and interpersonal relations skills to the general areas of occupational knowledge, consumer economics, community resources, government and law, and health.

Donald Fisher, in a 1978 study of functional literacy funded by the National Institute of Education, concluded that low estimates of illiteracy (under 10%) were found as frequently as higher estimates.

A discussion of the statistics must also include the fact that illiteracy rates are not equal in all segments of our society. Hispanic Americans, Native Americans and Black Americans all have rates of illiteracy higher than the national average. Using the older definition of the Bureau of the Census, in 1980 white American illiteracy could be determined to be 0.4%, Black American illiteracy to be 1.6%.

In contrast, using different definitions, the APL study found that 56% of the Hispanic Americans and 47% of the Black Americans were functionally illiterate, as compared to 16% of white Americans. With respect to non-English speaking individuals in the country, many of them are illiterate not only in English, but also in their primary language.

This situation creates a massive problem for teaching literacy skills to these individuals. In a recent study funded by the National Institute of Education (Reder, 1983), a study of non-English speaking immigrants found that individuals who were literate in their primary language acquired English literacy skills at a faster rate than their non-literate counterparts.

Another special population, handicapped Americans, has a higher than average rate of illiteracy. This population includes learning disabled adults who have perceptual problems which create massive barriers to learning to read.

In short, illiteracy has been shown to be a problem of significant magnitude. Definitions and estimates may vary but the importance of the issue is agreed to by all.

COSTS TO SOCIETY

The costs of illiteracy to society are massive. On Sri Lanka, the tiny republic off the southeastern tip of India, waterborne diseases crippled thousands of people. In program after program, they tried to teach the families to cover their water pots while cooking their food. They all failed. However, once the people were taught to read, they changed their orientation toward health and hygiene. Waterborne diseases were no longer rampant.

Within the U.S., the report "A Nation At Risk (1983)" stated that: "Business and military leaders complain that they are required to spend millions of dollars on costly remedial education and training programs in such basic skills as reading, writing, spelling and computation."

In this country, an adult illiterate is a lost resource. The individual has trouble reading subway signs, tax forms, children's report cards, and consumer information.

An obvious result of illiteracy is unemployment. Illiterates in a recent study were found to be unable to find their way to a job interview without a great deal of assistance. While trying to remember the address, they had to find their way around the city by attempting to read street signs, bus and subway inside a building, using wall maps and asking directions. Once there, they had to fill out a job application form. It is not surprising, then, that adult illiterates frequently do not even try to find their way out of the patterns they have come to depend upon in order to live and survive. In a nation that prides itself on individualism, the potential of these individuals is lost to society, to their families, and to themselves.

APPROACHES

Models of adult basic education and literacy programs vary. Generally speaking, adult illiterates are taught how to read in community-based programs, library-based programs, industry-based programs, and government-based programs. Each has one thing in common—there is a teacher who cares. Skilled teachers use a variety of instructional approaches. Most incorporate phonics into their teaching. Some programs are computer or technology based. Effective reading instruction has always been characterized by two important factors: (1) the teacher has a method and knows how to use it, and (2) the learner wants to learn.

The adult as a learner is different than the child as a learner. Adult learners bring to the learning environment a broader background of life experience, a sense of why they are participating, specific expectations and goals, and a personal sense of past academic accomplishments. Some educators have described the teaching of an adult learner as being as much personalized counseling as it is academic instruction. Much is still unknown about the adult learner. The Federal government should be funding research on reading for the adult learner.

FEDERAL RESPONSE

Around the world, national responses to illiteracy have usually followed one of two models. The first approach has been to institute a national mass literacy effort. The other model is a community-based approach. In a 1984 Unesco synthesis by

Bola, fifteen national mass literacy campaigns were studied. In all programs, the major focus was to raise the entire nation's literacy level. These mass literacy efforts often proved to be short-lived. The second approach, to work on a national movement to build literacy programs in each community and to link resources to economic development, has gained favor by many observers in the United States (Hunter and Harman, 1979).

Basically, the United States has no national policy. Currently, the Administration is funding the Adult Literacy Initiative, which is working with the national Coalition for Literacy and the Advertising Council to produce public service announcements designed to build a wider awareness of the illiteracy problem and to enlist volunteer tutors and corporate support. The Adult Literacy Initiative is also encouraging the development of state and local literacy councils. The Department of Education is also funding the National Assessment of Young Adults through the NAEP program. This study may provide a clearer assessment of the extent of the illiteracy problem. All of these efforts are useful and important. But they are not enough.

Paul Delker, the Department of Education official in charge of the Adult Education program, has reported that each year more students enter the category of adult illiterates by leaving school without the ability to read. There are several reasons for this situation.

Only one half of the students eligible to receive special programming under Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act are funded to participate in the remedial reading and mathematics programs offered to disadvantaged students. Where do the rest go to learn how to read?

Many students who cannot read are labelled handicapped by the schools and are sent to special classes for the learning disabled. These classes are usually taught by teachers without training in the teaching of reading. What happens to them? Since the major presenting symptom of learning disability is usually a reading problem, it seems reasonable to require that the learning disabilities and special education teacher be trained in the teaching of reading.

Many high risk students such as these, without effective reading instruction, eventually become part of the adult illiteracy statistics.

Some adults who want to learn how to read well enough to meet a personal goal find instruction through the community-based services of the Laubach or Literacy Volunteers programs. Others receive help on the job. Still others find help at tutoring programs conducted by their local libraries. But most who find programs find them as part of the adult basic education program. However, all of these sources of knowledge are blocked to many adults because of problems associated with schedules, transportation, or child care or simply because of lack of room in the programs.

What else can be done? A massive spending program aimed at fully funding the elementary and secondary education programs now on the books would make a difference. But full funding is unlikely to occur. Fully developing a set a community-based programs linked with the Adult Education programs of the states could work, but that too is unlikely to occur.

What then can be done with limited resources? The Federal government could take a much more active role in the fight to reduce adult illiteracy by:

1. Increasing educational research in areas of adult learning, adult illiteracy and the instruction of adults;
2. Promoting the development of teacher education and certification programs for teachers of adult learners;
3. Promoting the development of new learning materials for the adult learner, including computer-based materials.
4. Encouraging the development of programs to coordinate the many community-based, adult basic education programs and non-traditional education programs;
5. Promoting the development of television-based education programs either through the cable-dedicated channels or microwave mediums;
6. Rewarding employers who train adult illiterates to become literate and productive workers; and
7. Coordinating the Federal government's education, health and human services, defense, agriculture, and labor programs that affect the illiterate adult.

Literacy demands are increasing for almost every job in the country. Tom Sticht's work with the reading requirements of various occupational categories of the Army determined that functioning as a soldier required measurable literacy skills. A military policeman needed to be able to read on the eleventh grade level and an infantryman on the tenth grade level. Just since World War II, the literacy levels required by the military have increased. Literacy is not a static notion. To arrive at a definition of literacy, one must take into consideration both the skill level of the individual and the demands of the world around him.

Literacy is vitally important in the workplace and for the continued growth of our economy. Literate workers can adapt and change. Illiterate workers must depend on developed patterns in order to cope. The country needs workers who can adapt and change with the changing economy. There is a national responsibility to create the opportunity for all citizens to acquire those literacy skills necessary to ensure not only their own productivity but that of the next generation as well.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Dr. Manning.

The next witness is Mrs. Monika Sullivan.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Monika Sullivan. I live in Annandale in Fairfax County, VA. I came to this country in 1959 from Germany. At that time, I could hardly speak English. I had been taken by the Nazis from Czechoslovakia to Germany when I was 12 years old and in fifth grade for forced labor on a farm.

After World War illiteracy was over, I escaped to West Germany, where I met my husband, who was an American soldier. When I first arrived in the United States, I worked as a waitress, and my husband and I started a family. I became a citizen of the United States in 1964.

I followed my husband who, as part of the military, moved every 3 or 4 years. We settled in Virginia in 1973. Since then, I have done volunteer work for the fire department and the Fairfax Hospital thrift shop.

Last December, I wanted to apply for a job as a crossing guard with Fairfax County Public Schools. Because I had never had the opportunity to finish school, the supervisor of the crossing guards, Captain Clark, told me I would need to get a GED, a high school equivalency diploma.

I called Fairfax County's Office of Adult and Community Education, and on January 2, 1985, I started school. I attended class two mornings a week from 9:30 to noon. I had to study reading and writing, math, science, and social studies. I didn't know anything besides a little math. Science, naturally, was the hardest.

With the help of my teacher and the push and encouragement from everyone else in the adult education office, I made fast progress. The teacher took so much time with each student. There were volunteer tutors to help in class when I had questions. You sure need them. I was in a hurry, so my teacher gave me homework, a lot of homework. When I had trouble, I could even call my teacher at home. I never could have succeeded without the help of my family and the encouragement from the school.

This past June, I took the GED—General Educational Development—test and passed. I didn't believe that I was going to pass, but everybody else told me that I would. When I opened that letter with the diploma, I jumped in the air 10 meters, I was so happy. I called Captain Clark. She was so proud of me. Then I got the job.

I can see now why I needed this education for more than just a job. It has helped me in writing to people and in talking. I feel more confident in conversations. I am surprised that so many American people did not finish high school. I've been telling everyone to go back to school, no matter what age.

I hope that you will continue the adult basic education program. It is every important for everyone. The class serves people who are younger than I am, too, and people from many different backgrounds.

An Iranian girl who has a diploma needed to study English to get into a nursing program. One of the other girls in the Learning Center is going to try for a diploma now that she sees that I did it. I have given her some confidence.

Only in this country do you get such an opportunity in the first place. When I told my friends in Germany and Czechoslovakia about adult education, they couldn't believe that at my age the schools would still accept me in a free program. Please continue to support adult basic education for all people in America who need education.

Thank you for letting me come here today to tell you about my experience in this program in Fairfax County. I am very proud to be here.

Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you, Mrs. Sullivan.

Mrs. Graves, do you care to make a statement?

Mrs. **Graves**. Mr. Chairman, I would only add to what the other witnesses have said and our thanks to this committee for what you have done in bringing about a public awareness of this problem and for your commitment to education for our young and continuation of services for the adults who need them.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

Mrs. Whelan.

Mrs. **Whelan**. I'm just very happy to be here also, and I thank you all for all your commitment.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

Senator Stafford.

Chairman **Stafford**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Richardson, what do you see as the most notable accomplishments of the Reading is Fundamental organization?

Mrs. **Richardson**. I suppose that the success that has accumulated over its 20 years of history in knowing how to help children become readers and also more and more how to help parents help their children. I think those are our biggest.

Maybe Mrs. Graves would like to add something from her perspective.

Mrs. **Graves**. I think there are a couple of major accomplishments. One of them is, because it's such a simple program to operate, it's managed to mobilize communities and bring into the schools, for example, parents who would never go to school under other circumstances, either out of shyness, or intimidation, or whatever, but they have brought parents into their child's education and into the schools. It has mobilized other community leaders as well.

In terms of the children, simply surrounding them with literature. In many schools, they simply do not have books, other than textbooks, for children to read, and of course the NIE study pointed out that that was one of the great drawbacks of many of our classrooms—that the books are not available for the youngsters.

Bringing books to the children, letting the children choose the books and read a wide variety of books, has been a major accomplishment, with the result that children are reading more in these programs, they're reading better, and we just get letter after letter from school superintendents and others who tell us that the reading scores have actually risen since RIF came into the schools.

Chairman **Stafford**. Thank you very much.

Dr. Manning, your testimony, I thought was very interesting when you touched on the lack of time devoted to reading in school. I wonder if, to some extent, at least a few years ago, lack of discipline in the schools on the part of faculty had something to do with the lack of time devoted to reading and maybe to other important subjects.

I remember going to a college that mainly produces teachers in my State, Vermont, some years ago and having lunch with the student body and faculty. When the president of that institution led me to one of the faculty tables, I was under the impression that several loggers from a nearby logging camp had come in to have lunch, and when I inquired who they were, I was told they were members of the faculty. I wondered how faculty dressing like that could expect to produce teachers who would impose any kind of discipline, including reading, writing, and arithmetic, on their students.

I hope that situation is improving. I think it is in the college I have in mind. But I wondered what impact that was having on education in our public schools.

Mr. **Manning**. I think, Senator, a good deal. I think that we have, in some instances, indicated and given teachers direction that would indicate that, particularly in working with minority children, what we need to do is to bring manners and courtesies down to the least common denominator. I violently oppose that notion.

I'm of a mind that teachers, in their appearance and their manner and dress and in their speech, ought to reflect the very best of what those communities seek to become, not what those communities at the present time are.

In bringing my students to the schools, I absolutely insist that they appear, in my view, in what is appropriate for what a professional person ought to be. I feel extremely strongly on that point, Senator.

Chairman **Stafford**. Thank you. I think we agree.

Doctor, it seems that those individuals most in need of education programs may not recognize the advantages of participation. What do you think could be done to attract these people?

Mr. **Manning**. Forgive me, Senator. Do you mean the young people who are going into teacher education?

Chairman **Stafford**. No. I'm talking now about students themselves who may not recognize the desirability, for example, of learning to read and what they are missing in personal enjoyment as well as opportunity for themselves in the future by remaining functionally illiterate.

Mr. **Manning**. Senator, I think that this committee will—and particularly from the business community—will hear—and from the Reading is Fundamental group—that there are many ways in which we can motivate young people to want to learn to read, and I believe that any activity that does so increase that motivation is to be applauded and encouraged.

However, my own feeling related to public school practice is that the very best means of getting children to read is the presence of a well read teacher. I am particularly distressed at the knowledge of adult and children's literature, for example, that we have in terms of teachers in our schools—what it is that teachers are reading themselves.

We need to do a much better job in terms of not only what I consider the professional preparation of teachers—that is, the methodological, the technical one—but what kind of individuals are we getting in there in the first place? That is, what has been the academic preparation prior to the point that they come into the professional programs?

A teacher education program can do very little to improve a lifetime of non-reading habits on the part of teachers, and so I think the best means of motivating children in the long run is the well read teacher and one who is conversant with children and young adult literature.

Chairman **STAFFORD**. Thank you very much, Doctor.

Mrs. Sullivan, would you have taken advantage of the GED program in Fairfax County whether you were interested in the crossing job or not?

Mrs. **SULLIVAN**. Yes, I would, but I didn't know anything about it until Captain Clark told me about it.

Chairman **STAFFORD**. All right. I noted that when you had learned you had passed you leaped 10 meters in the air. I wonder if, additionally, you shouldn't apply for membership on our Olympic team. [Laughter.]

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **HAWKINS**. Thank you.

Senator Simon.

Senator **SIMON**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I regret—I have a meeting I'm already late for—that I'm going to have to leave this hearing.

Again, I want to commend you and Senator Stafford for calling these hearings, and I want to commend all of you.

Mrs. Sullivan, you are, in a special way—meaning no disrespect to the other witnesses—you are a special heroine, because you represent what has to happen, and we thank you.

Mrs. **SULLIVAN**. Thank you.

Senator **SIMON**. Just a couple of observations. One, we now have 5 percent of the world's population, roughly one-third of the world's economy, we are 49th among the nations of the world in our literacy ranking. If that bottom figure—49th—does not move up, that figure of one-third of the world's economy is going to move down, I think just as certain as we are sitting here now.

The two things I think we have to keep in mind—I'm talking to my colleagues now—are, one, we have to identify people who need assistance to become literate. I think we ought to use teachers in our schools. I think frequently they know when parents can't read and write.

I think when people sign up for public assistance, if they can't read and write, we ought to notify them of programs that are available. Or when people sign up for unemployment compensation there are a whole series of things that take place in our society where we can identify disadvantages, and we ought to take that opportunity. It is not to force or embarrass anyone but to seize that opportunity to bring this issue out. It will vary from community to community. What is the right answer in Gus Hawkins' community is not the right answer in Bob Stafford's community; it is going to vary.

Finally, we have to find answers that provide opportunities without embarrassing people. People are not going to walk into a high school to learn to read.

Dr. Manning, your idea of a literacy corps—it's very interesting to me that the Kissinger report recommended that we establish a literacy corps for Central America. I'm not opposed to that; I think it's probably a good idea; but maybe we ought to start a little closer to home than Central America with a literacy corps.

I hope we are creative, those of us who are on this side of the witness stand and those of you who are out there, and that together we really approach this thing and really do something. I think we can, for very minimal costs, have a significant impact on this nation in a critical way.

Again, I thank you, both chairmen, for calling this meeting. I think it's extremely important. And I thank the witnesses.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Senator.

Just one reference to the ranking of this country in connection with others I thought was very interesting, because the Bureau of the Census has indicated that our literacy rate is almost 99 percent—some very high percentage. So it's pretty obvious the Census enumerators, using the forms that they used, asked people, "Can you read?" Those who could read answered yes, and those who couldn't read didn't answer, so that that has been very misleading, I think.

Bob and I, in foreign countries where we travel sometimes, I think, would not dare get up and say how illiterate we as a nation are. We try to convey the idea that we're on the way to that high percentage.

But it is embarrassing, and I think your point is well taken.

Mr. Goodling.

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A couple of questions. First of all, connected with this whole illiteracy problem, I think, is the idea that somehow or other we haven't made parents understand that there is no certain age that your child is ready for a formal education.

I don't know if there is a role on the Federal level we can play or not to make parents understand that five-and-a-half or six-and-a-half may just not be the time for their particular child to begin a formal education program.

Then, even worse, my wife is a first grade teacher. From what I understand from the affluent community in which she teaches—a pretty good one—the end of the year is one of the most devastating periods she goes through, because of course in that lock-step of first grade, second grade, third grade, how do you convince the parent that it's in the best interests of the child not to go on to a formal second grade sitting. They are embarrassed, their neighbors might talk, or something of that nature?

I don't know whether we have a role to play in that or whether we have a partnership to play, but it seems to me it's part of the problem that we're talking about today, particularly when we talk about a preventive program.

I don't know if any of you have any comments on that or not.

Mrs. RICHARDSON. I think that, again, I would reiterate, in breaking into the cycle you described as intergenerational, we need to do a great deal more, and this committee's giving visibility to the problem will help in this, to convince parents that they have a very important educational role with their children before the five-and-a-half, or whatever the age given to go to school is, and that a child who has had no preparation, has not been exposed to reading matter, to numbers, to all the different things that we can do if we think about it, is going to have a much harder time, even on the first step of that lock-step ladder that you describe. If you don't catch them early, I think it makes it very hard to start them out.

Mr. GOODLING. Dr. Manning, would you elaborate on this statement? If I'm quoting you correctly, you said, "We have to get the teacher training and the faculty of the teacher training institutions out into the public schools if we are going to improve teacher training."

Mr. MANNING. Yes, I would.

I think that if you look at the professional preparation of the teacher, it consists of what I might call an academic preparation in the 2 years or more prior to the time that the student enters into a professional preparation program.

In most instances, that entire preparation program, as it relates to the courses in method which constitute a major portion of the time which students spend in their professional preparation—I would say conservatively that students spend 24 academic hours in courses labeled as methods.

The distressing fact, Congressman Goodling, is that they are not methods courses at all; they are courses in credit for listening. They are courses that are taught within the safety of a college or university lecture hall where there are no children involved.

What I am proposing, and I try at my own university and with my own students, is to take them into the public schools and to teach those methods courses during the time that the children are in school and during the time that it is clear that the relationship between what the student is doing in a public school context is readily apparent to the professor who is teaching the course.

Now, the argument that this is done after the professional preparation and during student teaching is an indequate argument.

When the student goes into a student teaching context, generally speaking, the student operates within the system of the school, not the university, and the morale and dynamics of that particular school. So the student teacher becomes much more attuned to the traditional practices that are existing rather than to the practices that may or may not have been advocated by the university professor.

If the university professor is within the school, it seems to me very clear that the methodologies that are prescribed and encouraged ought to be put to the test of children and materials and teachers. What I'm saying is to make the teacher education institutions much more responsible for the education of beginning teachers. That primarily is what I'm getting at, Congressman.

Mr. GOODLING. I thank you.

My colleagues here have often heard me say that I learned how to be a superintendent of schools not in my master's program or doctoral program but by being a president of a school board and a president of a PTA. That's how I learned how to be a superintendent of schools. So I think your program has a lot of merit.

Mr. MANNING. Yes, sir.

With the indulgence of the Chair, if I may comment on your earlier question to Mrs. Richardson, I think that the immense contribution which programs like RIF can make is in providing books to the parents of young children, and, whether or not those parents can read, they can read wordless books, picture books, of which there are many, many.

I believe that the single major reason for children failing to learn to read in school is that they have not been read with at home. I can document that academically, neurologically, but, in the vernacular, the major reason why they fail in school is that they have not been read with at home.

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. Mr. Williams.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Thank you.

First, just a brief response to the concern, which I share, about the necessity of civility, deportment, and appearance of teachers and administrators. Teachers are an important model for students. They also need to be an appropriate model and properly relate to them.

We ought to worry more about the length of knowledge within your head than about the length of hair outside your head. But, having said that, deportment is very important.

I guess the ultimate university is Plato at one end of a log and the student at the other, regardless of how Plato is dressed. I don't mean to diminish in saying this the importance of civility, but it should not take away from the necessity of a well educated teacher who can relate appropriately to the student.

Dr. Manning, let me pursue a little bit with you your good notion about a literacy corps. I had mentioned in an earlier statement this morning that I was pursuing some additional legislation to introduce—to sort of round out a literacy package that I've been working on. A literacy corps is what I've been struggling with, and the makeup of that corps in particularly.

Currently, about 25 percent of VISTA's volunteer effort is devoted to literacy. The problem is, the efforts are small, and they are, frankly, underfunded.

I'm wondering in this 20th anniversary of VISTA if we couldn't turn that corps into soldiers in a war on illiteracy. What would you think about that possibility?

Mr. MANNING. I, Congressman, frankly, do not know. I know of the VISTA Program, of course. I do not know the amount of training which the VISTA volunteers receive, nor do I know the populations with which they work.

I would, however, certainly endorse any movement in terms of legislation that would indicate a national commitment in terms of personnel and resources in addressing that particular program. Now, whether it is a literacy corps or a VISTA corps which has a certain redirection or a renewed emphasis in one particular area, I would certainly be comfortable with that.

Mr. **Williams**. Can the colleges and universities provide us with manpower to staff that literacy corps, and could those people be newly graduated teachers or the teacher practitioners who have not yet graduated? Can we deal with illiteracy with people who have not had a great deal of experience in teaching reading?

Mr. **Manning**. It would depend, Congressman, upon the training of those individuals.

While I would indicate that I believe that we need to increase the quality of young people coming into teaching—and that seems fairly apparent—and that can be documented, I think, when we look at the graduate record exams of students who have the incoming Miller analogy scores of students coming into teacher education programs.

But the point is, I think that in working in the area of reading and providing the basic skill of reading, I believe that certain colleges, in terms of the way they prepare teachers, could in fact respond to that particular concern.

I believe that we need to start with the colleges of teacher education and the degree to which those delivery systems can give us the kind of volunteers who can, in fact, work within the environments and produce demonstrable results.

So, I would say yes; there are some colleges, I think, that could do that, and I think primarily where to start is those colleges that are located in the major urban cities, where I think we have major problems of illiteracy. That's where I think we should start.

Chairman **Williams**. Thank you, and my thanks to all of you for your good counsel.

Mr. **Hawkins**. Major Owens.

Mr. **Owens**. I have just one basic question which I'd like any of the panelists to address themselves to, and that is, in most of your testimony you don't mention libraries at all—school libraries, community libraries, public libraries. I'd like to know from you whether you think they have a significant role to play.

I go into a lot of low-income housing projects, people on welfare; the only books that I see—no magazines, seldom even a newspaper in the home—the only books I see are the books that the very youngest children bring from the library. They wander in out of curiosity in many cases, and they bring books home from the library.

I understand libraries are having difficulty getting their budgets funded. School libraries in New York City are in terrible shape, according to a recent report.

I'd be interested in whether you, and people in leadership roles such as you, consider libraries to be significant. If you don't consider them significant, there's not much hope that we're going to solve these problems of getting funds to provide those books via public libraries or school libraries, et cetera. So I'd like your comments on that.

Mr. **Manning**. If I may respond briefly, Mr. Chair?

Chairman **Hawkins**. You may.

Mr. **Manning**. I would say, first of all, that children—and again, Becoming A Nation Of Readers indicates this clearly—children are spending too much time in commercially developed materials in school and not enough time in books. They ought to be spending much more time in library-type reading, and I would certainly endorse and support notions to have school reading programs become much more library-based than they are, let us say, school text based.

But therein lies a problem of parent education. Many parents believe there are school books and these are good, and then there are those library books, and those are sort of what you do if you don't have anything to do in school, and that's a notion that is pervasive among school people. That is, they think that if the children are not in the school book, they are, in fact, not purposely involved.

I would argue the other way. I would argue that they perhaps are more purposely involved in a library type book than they are, let us say, in commercially prepared materials in which they are filling in blanks or circling or whatever.

But also, Congressman Owens, I think there is, regarding what I see also as a decline in the amount of library books. I think that is directly related to the emphasis that has been given to computer-assisted instruction in the schools, that much of the funding for computers has come out of library budgets. The fact of the matter is, I have seen this over and over again. When the choice is made between buying computers or buying library books, the choice has always been, in the recent past, in buying computers, and that, if I may say, with your indulgence, Congressman Owens, is a terminal decision. [Laughter.]

Mr. **Owens**. Would anyone else care to comment?

Mrs. **Richardson**. I might just add that our experience in Reading is Fundamental, which has programs in all 50 States, is that the problem of lack of libraries and lack of books is appallingly widespread.

There are many communities in this country, in rural areas as well as in inner-city, where there is no access to free library books for people, and therefore it's very hard for people to find the materials to read. I wish we could all get together with the kind of commitment that Mr. Woodside referred to earlier to try to increase the availability of reading materials nationwide.

Mr. **Owens**. Thank you. I have no further questions.

Chairman **Hawkins**. May the Chair ask you, Dr. Manning, because I think you touched on it several times, but there seemed to be a little inconsistency at least—at least that impression. This is not by way of criticism. You spoke of instructional incapacity, and several times you mentioned the parental home problem in connection with illiteracy.

Most of the people that I have some acquaintance with in what I do in my particular congressional districts and in other districts throughout the country represent low-income homes; the mother is on welfare; many of them come from limited English-speaking families; and so on. So we are talking about parents who cannot read themselves.

So, regarding these individuals who come from such environments—minority environments, families who do not speak English, where books are not even present, and so forth, are we consigning these individuals to neglect? Or how can we reach these individuals?

Before this committee several years ago, Dr. Ron Edmonds—you may or may not know him—at Harvard and also Michigan State developed the effective schools approach in which he made a statement that I have never forgotten. He said, "No matter wherever they are, whenever we decide, we can teach all children to read. The reason we don't do it is that we don't desire to do it."

I'm wondering whether or not the emphasis that has been placed on parents this morning is exactly placing the responsibility where it is. Obviously, parents who can read are going to offer to their children a great opportunity, but what about those who can't? What about those who have themselves been denied the opportunity to become readers? What about those who are in the income situation that I described and who constitute most of the illiterates?

How, within the context of what you mentioned—I thought you were coming close to it when you talked about the instructional qualifications of teachers, many of whom are not going to teach these individuals—these children that I speak of, unless they themselves have some expectation that every child can learn, unless they themselves assume that responsibility, regardless of the home from which the child comes.

It seems to me we have set the schools up as that institution that should be equipped to overcome these environmental factors, regardless of what the odds are, that every child is entitled to be taught.

I'm wondering what your response is to that.

Mr. MANNING. My response, Congressman Hawkins, is one of optimism. My concern for the home environment has to do with what I believe are matters related to attention that children have to print form.

What I would encourage, even if parents cannot read, based upon the cultural backgrounds and the language differences of which you speak, there certainly are wordless books and picture books which parents can use to introduce their children to the world of books. This has very little to do, Congressman, with the fact that parents cannot read. It is the fact that the book is there.

But in a more meaningful way, I believe very strongly that the best place to train teachers is in fact in the very schools which you describe.

In the University of Minnesota, I believe that it is of little consequence to take our undergraduates to the schools in St. Anthony Village, which is where I live, because the children are going to learn to read anyway.

Congressman, there are two kinds of children who come to school: The kind of child who comes to school and is going to learn to read no matter what the school does, and the child who comes to school and who desperately needs the school in order to learn to read. It is that kind of child that I believe the colleges of teacher education have not prepared our beginning teachers to teach.

What I'm indicating is that I believe in my own context I try to take my students to the Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School, which has the largest minority population in the city of Minneapolis, and I believe that the place to train those teachers is in the Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School, which is where those young people are needed so desperately, where we can provide, using these undergraduates, tutorial experiences.

But at the same time that we are in Mary McLeod Bethune, I try very hard to involve parents by either sending books home, by sending them to the library, by trying to get the home much more intimately involved.

So if I did confuse, Congressman, I apologize. I think it is a two-step process. I think we do in fact need to influence the home environment, but I think we do need to take the young teachers into the schools with the professors and particularly those schools where we have the highest incidence of reading disfunction; I think that's where they belong.

Chairman **Hawkins**. You certainly didn't confuse; I don't want to leave that impression. I thought that some further explanation might clear up what seemed to be an inconsistency. I think you have done that.

The only problem I see is, how do we attract those highly competent teachers into those areas where they are most needed? We know that it's human nature not to want to go into some of the areas because of even fear of physical security and other reasons.

Have you anything to suggest in terms of how we attract those highly competent teachers? Many of them go into those areas, and they become so competent, until they end up as administrators and go into other areas as a reward. So there's a constant turnover, leaving to those areas where the best teachers are needed a vacuum.

Mr. **Manning**. I think as undergraduates, Congressman, we can control that a little bit simply by assigning the classes to be taught in those areas. We do have control of our undergraduate programs, and we can put our young people in there. However, once they have completed their programs, then it becomes much more difficult to get them to stay in those particular schools.

A week ago, I shared a platform with Sean McBride, a Nobel prizewinner, who spoke about the fact that young people had lost their idealism. I think Mr. McBride has a point. I think we need to get the very best of our teachers who are now in service into those schools, and by their example, and by their model, perhaps we will encourage other young people to do the same.

I have to be an idealist about the matter. I think that legislation can do only so much. I think it is when people of good intentions decide that the problem will be resolved the problem will be resolved.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

Mrs. Richardson, suppose we give you the opportunity of making the last comment, if you wish.

Mrs. **Richardson**. I'd just like to say that it has been both a pleasure and a very good learning experience for me to be here today, and it's very encouraging to know of the commitment of these committees to trying to focus attention and to find a common way to go forward and do something about the problem of illiteracy.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you very much.

If there are no further questions or comments, the meeting is adjourned.

[Additional information submitted for the record follows:]

[Whereupon, at 12:00 noon, the subcommittees were adjourned.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

I am pleased that the committees are here today to discuss the problem of illiteracy, a problem which threatens our children, their parents, our economy, our national security and the future of our country.

There are many definitions of illiteracy. Some say illiteracy is the inability to read and write. Others say illiteracy is the inability to perform a wide range of skills necessary to function in everyday life.

There are just as many estimates of the number of Americans who are illiterate. Some say there may be 1 million people who are illiterate in America. Others estimate that as many as 60 million people are illiterate.

I am sure it is safe to say that their are millions of Americans who do not have the skills—reading, writing, communication, or job skills—to function adequately in our modern day technological society.

We also know that because these adults do not have these necessary skills, we are jeopardizing our economy, our businesses, our society as a whole, and, most importantly, the potential of each individual in our Nation.

We are here today to discuss what we can do to aid those adults who are illiterate and what we can do to prevent our next generation from growing up illiterate. I believe that there are several points that we must keep in mind when discussing this complex problem.

First, it is important to emphasize that reading and writing are just two of the wide range of skills that are required to be functionally literate in today's modern society. We must keep in mind that adults must acquire all the complex skills needed for them to function effectively in their environment.

Second, along with acquiring a wide range of complex skills to be functional in society, many adults need other support services such as welfare, food stamps, adequate housing, child care services, and transportation services, to move up and out of the trap of poverty and illiteracy.

Third, we must expand the programs that provide adult education to the millions of people across the country who need these services. The Adult Education Act funds only a fraction of the adults who are eligible. We must continue to encourage help from businesses and we must increase coordination of literacy and training efforts at the State and local levels and among the private sector.

And last, we must work hard to provide excellence in our schools so that we can prevent another generation from growing up illiterate. We must enhance our Federal commitment to public education and broaden our support for targeted education programs. We are faced with staggering statistics on the number of students who are dropping out of school. Today it is estimated that 1 in every 4 students entering 9th grade will not graduate on time or will not graduate at all.

The United States has become a great nation because of the contributions of each individual citizen. Our country cannot move forward without support and assistance from every American. It is our Nation's responsibility to guarantee that each individual has the opportunity to reach her or his fullest potential and education is the most important path to reaching that potential.

The causes of illiteracy are many and the answers are just as varied and complex. There is no one program nor one solution to solve this national problem. But, I believe we have the knowledge, the resources, and the ability to help our young people to complete their education and to aid our adults in obtaining the skills they need to reach their fullest potential. Our investments today will reap a harvest of riches for every American and for our great Nation.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) is the world's largest membership organization for professionals who specialize in workplace training and human resource development. Organizations represented by ASTD's 50,000 members provide work for more than half of the nation's employees. Employers are the principal providers of training, retraining and education of the adult workforce.

We commend the House Education and Labor, and the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committees for holding hearings on the problem of illiteracy. Illiteracy is a problem that rightfully attracts the attention of public policy makers, educators, and employers. However, the problem should be defined much broader to include all basic skills. ASTD members are responsible for corporate strategic planning and productivity objectives including employee development for entry-level youth to top management. We are pleased to outline today some recent examples of company-sponsored basic skills and literacy programs.

Illiteracy is a widespread and lingering problem facing the United States today. Remedies are not simple, but they are achievable. Estimates from the Department of Education indicate that more than 23 million adults (both employed and unemployed) are functional illiterates. They can not read, write or solve problems at a level enabling them to cope with such simple tasks as completing a job application or passing a written driving test. In addition to these functional illiterates, it is estimated that 47 million adults are borderline literates, able to function but not proficiently. The loss to the American economy from illiteracy is estimated at about $100 billion.

The population of illiterates is estimated to include almost 1 million high school dropouts and 150,000 high school graduates. It is also estimated that 15 million adults holding jobs today are functional illiterates. Estimates are that one-third of all dislocated workers do not have a high school diploma. A lack of proper training in basic skills is a serious problem in all areas of the workforce. The problem revolves around deficient reading, writing and computational skills, complicated by poor attitudes and poor work habits. With changing demographics, a lack of inflation, and deficit reduction, the unemployment rate will slip below six percent. Employers will no longer be able to hire at the front of the unemployment queue, and workers hired will have significant basic skills deficiencies. A large percentage of new hires will be women, minorities, youth and unskilled who will need basic skills training.

Employers are forced, then, to offer remedial and basic skills courses at the workplace. In a survey of employers, 37 percent said they were training employees in basic skills that should have been acquired in school. These courses in basic skills require significant corporate investments of time and money. In a recent ASTD study on employee educational assistance (e.g., tuition aid), 52.4% of all respondents said at least one-fourth of all their employees receiving educational aid take courses in basic educational skills. Additionally, the survey found that the educational assistance programs offered in-house tended to be remedial and job-related. Examples cited in the ASTD survey included remedial education, arithmetic, literacy and other basic-skills classes.

Because employers are the principal providers of training and retraining for the American workforce, they have the capability and desire to recognize and address the need for basic skills. Today, business faces a shrinking pool of skilled employees which results in reduced productivity. The costs are high for in-house remedial education, but as can be observed by the following programs, they are worth the expense to the companies:

Texas Instruments, Inc. facility in Dallas, Texas encourages employee participation in their tuition reimbursement program attracting 4,000 to 5,000 employees each semester. Providing opportunity for all employees to further their education, Training and Development Managers at Texas Instruments offer remedial courses for their employees from third grade to high school level in reading and math. Texas Instruments offers such courses after hours on an individual, tutored, self-paced basis.

Sprague Electric Company in Sanford, Maine has set up a partnership program with local schools and universities. Sprague pays for their employees to participate in local adult education programs. Included in these adult education classes are literacy classes offered under Sprague's "Right to Read" program to improve employee reading skills. Because Sprague did not have classroom facilities in-house, the courses are now offered at the local high school, community college or university. Sprague provides the opportunity and resources for their employees to participate. With the off-site location, they feel no employee is singled out for a remedial course he/she may be taking.

Polaroid in Cambridge, Massachusetts also takes an active role in encouraging basic skills for their employees based on skills needed for current jobs. Polaroid offers many levels of reading and math assistance for their employees with individual line departments picking up the tab. With an organized program of referrals, consulting and assessment systems, Polaroid's human resources staff can determine individual needs of employees according to their particular job. Although offerings exist for "literacy support groups" that aid in job-related needs, Polaroid concentrates on coordinating this literacy help for those positions requiring certain levels of basic skills. Polaroid hires part time educators who teach employees basic skills during regular work hours. Our members at Polaroid attribute low employee turnover to their basic skills program. Polaroid can hire the disadvantaged and hard to employ and through remediation, bring them to a level in which they achieve a competitive productivity rate.

Planter's Peanuts, a subsidiary of Nabisco Brands, Inc. in Suffolk, Virginia established the Planter's Employee Training Program in 1978. This program is designed to help employees who want to improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Planter's program was the first of its kind in Virginia and is limited to 40 volunteer students. The adult education curriculum is based on each individual employee need, and progress is on an individual basis. The employees enrolled in the program are required to attend class on their own time for a minimum of four hours per week. Instruction is provided at the plant by educators from the Suffolk City School System. Together, Planter's and the City of Suffolk fund the program.

These are just a few examples of the actions, programs and intitiatives ASTD members inside firms are taking in response to the literacy problem. As the representatives of employer-based training, ASTD members have created high quality basic skills and literacy programs in-house, or in collaboration with local education institutions. Training and retraining in the workplace has a significant impact on productivity; illiteracy costs companies thousands of dollars in lost productivity every year. One of the major sources of U.S. competitiveness is the skill level of America's workforce. To strengthen, improve and expand these skills, the basics must first be conquered. Business and industry have a stake in the fight against illiteracy. Their participation and cooperation with education is a progressive step in demonstrating concern and action.

ILLITERACY IN AMERICA

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1985

House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor and Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources,

Washington, DC.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Augustus F. Hawkins (chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Hawkins, Kildee, Williams, Martinez, Goodling, Fawell, and Gunderson; and Senators Stafford and Simon.

Staff present: Polly Gault, staff director, and Elizabeth Hackett, legislative assistant, of the Senate subcommittee; and John F. Jennings, counsel; Nancy Kober, legislative specialist; Reta Lewis, research assistant, and Andrew Hartman, Republican legislative associate, of the House subcommittee.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The joint hearings by the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education and the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities will now proceed.

As most of you realize, this is merely a continuation of the joint hearings on the problem of illiteracy. I am informed that Senator Stafford, the cochair of the hearings, is on his way; but because of the time problem that we have with some of the witnesses, we are proceeding now.

[Opening statement of Hon. Augustus F. Hawkins follows:]

Opening Statement of Hon. Augustus F. Hawkins, a Representative in Congress From the State of California and Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor

This morning the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education and the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities convene to continue our joint hearings on the problem of illiteracy in America. In my view, the decision to have these hearings was one of the most encouraging developments of this session of Congress, and I commend Senator Stafford for his concern about the problem and his eagerness to act on it.

Our last hearing on August 1 provided us with an understanding of the gravity and scope of the problem of illiteracy. We learned that the number of functionally illiterate persons is large and growing. We heard recommendations that preventive measures involving improvements at the elementary and secondary level and in the colleges of teacher education are as important as remedial measures in reducing the number of illiterate persons.

I think it largely comes down to the challenge expressed by the late Ronald Edmonds when he stated: "We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far."

Thus, if widespread illiteracy is, as writer Jonathan Kozol has stated, "not an accident," but "the logical consequence of the kinds of schools we run," we are suffering from a lack of political and moral courage.

We know what schools and programs are effective. We know that investing in such programs as Head Start and compensatory education obtain results and actually save money. According to a new report on reading from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the benefits of Federal programs such as Chapter 1 seem to be reflected in the improvements of reading scores of certain groups of students as they move through school. Despite our knowledge in these areas, we are financially starving our schools and have cut Federal aid.

I believe we need to see a meaningful commitment from all levels of government and from the private and voluntary sector if we are to solve the problem of illiteracy. I think William S. Woodside, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the American Can Company, summed up the reasons why when he testified on August 1, stating, "I suggest that we view our educational programs and proposals for educational reform as investments and that we focus attention on their future benefits as well as immediate costs."

Through today's and Thursday's hearings, I hope we might delve more deeply into these and other issues, with an eye toward how we might fashion a bipartisan program of education reform and what decisive actions we might take to mobilize the country on a literacy campaign covering the entire citizenry. I look forward to hearing the statements of our distinguished panel today.

Chairman HAWKINS. The cochair has a statement which, because of the limited time available, I will not present at this time but ask unanimous consent that the statement be included in the record at this point. Without objection, it is so ordered.

[The statement appears on p. 82.]

Chairman HAWKINS. Mr. Goodling, do you have a statement at this time?

Mr. GOODLING. I will forgo any formal statement also because of the time problem. I will just indicate that I am especially interested in the role of the home and the family in preparing young children for the task of learning to read and write. I think that other people are also interested in this same issue. I have had a lot of experience along that line, and I am looking forward to having our witnesses tell us how best we can play a role in doing something about one of the greatest problems facing us, which is the literacy problem in this country.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Mr. Goodling.

We are pleased to have as a witness—it is hardly descriptive to describe him as a witness because he is also a Member of the Senate and very much interested in the work of the joint hearings. I am delighted to welcome and to have as the first witness this morning the Honorable Edward Zorinsky, Senator from Nebraska.

Senator, I know that the farm problem is perhaps more immediate in your life at this time. I think it is an unusual honor for this committee to have you during these troublesome times in Nebraska and elsewhere to come before this committee to talk about another serious problem, that of illiteracy. We look forward to your presentation this morning.

All of the statements will be entered into the record. Senator, you may deal with your statement as you so desire.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Chairman, I would think that the Senator's first job would be to try to find some way to get the Cornhuskers to score a few points. They're not doing very well out there.

Chairman HAWKINS. I think you got a problem with the hogs as well, do you not? Not the Redskins but the other kind.

Thank you, Senator.

STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD ZORINSKY, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

Senator ZORINSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here this morning to testify. I thank you for your interest in this very important issue. Certainly agriculture is very important to my State and the Nation, but also the illiteracy problems confronting this Nation are a paramount concern to all of us and, I think, take as high a priority also.

With that, I would like to briefly state that I am pleased that the Education Subcommittees of the House and Senate are addressing the issue of illiteracy. I read with interest the testimony of the witnesses at the first hearing. While I agree with their observations about the seriousness of this problem, I was concerned about what was not said. I agree with the statement of William Woodside of the American Can Co. that adult illiteracy will continue until our public schools reduce the number of graduates or dropouts they send into the ranks of adult illiterates.

What we also need to ask is why the schools are graduating students who can't read. And I think if we ask why students are dropping out, we will find out that many are doing so because they are not learning to read and therefore not learning much of anything.

Dr. John Manning of the International Reading Association gave the following reasons for students leaving school without the ability to read: No. 1, not enough funding for chapter 1 remedial programs; No. 2, a shortage of remedial reading teachers. But he made no mention of regular reading programs. Isn't it possible that, if reading were taught properly in the first place, there wouldn't have to be so much remedial reading followup?

Dr. Manning also said that many students who cannot read are labeled handicapped by the schools. This is certainly true. An issue we must address is the tragedy of mislabeling. Many children who were labeled learning disabled and even uneducable because they couldn't read were found to be normal after they were taught by different methods.

Recently the report of the Commission on Reading was issued. Becoming a Nation of Readers is based on 20 years of research and was designed to advance academic achievement in our schools. It has not yet received the attention it should, so I am particularly glad that Dr. Anderson, who served as its chairman, is to testify today before your committee.

Among their recommendations were that parents should read to children and have books available to them. They also encourage the development of reader primers which are interesting to the children.

Today we have material like this for beginning readers, and I quote: "Tap, tap, tap, see me work. I make good things. See the red ones. See the blue ones. See the yellow ones. No, no, no, I do not want red ones. I do not want blue ones. I want green ones." In case you don't recognize that, it is an adaptation of the fairy tale, the

"Shoemaker and the Elves." But it does not use the word shoemaker or elves. It's an example of the dumbing-down of textbooks because of readability formulas which limit sentence and word length and delete unfamiliar words. Some teachers blame a lack of pleasure in reading for poor reading skills, but I would be interested in finding out whether the lack of effective teaching has resulted in these formulae. If children aren't learning to read, an easy answer is to make the books simpler.

Probably the most important but least noted recommendation of Becoming a Nation of Readers is that phonics should be used through the second grade. However, testimony at a hearing last year by the Senate Education Subcommittee indicated that 85 percent of the schools in this country do not use phonics.

It seems that, if the top reading professionals in the country have concluded that phonics is essential in the early years, but most schools are not using it and most teachers have not learned it, this surely is an area that must be addressed in any discussion of illiteracy.

Last week, of three school administrators visiting my office, one said that this report had not received much attention, and the other two had not even heard of it. The Department of Education and the education community should be working to make sure that it is disseminated.

Another report, that of the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education, initiated by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, stated that illiteracy is a threat to our welfare. If you read on very carefully, you find first that they complain that there is not enough money being spent on reading research; and in the next breath, they say they aren't using the research anyway and apparently have no intention of doing so. I believe that failure of the colleges of education to use the research that has been done on successful reading methods is negligence of the worst sort. Teachers cannot teach what they do not know.

You are aware that I have introduced legislation to establish a national commission to determine the causes of illiteracy. I am pleased that nine members of the Education and Labor Committee have cosponsored the House bill.

Because educators have been quarreling for years over the merits of the whole-word method versus phonics, I proposed having this commission made up of not only educators but persons from outside groups as well. They would, among other things, determine which teaching methods are successful. Just as we test which medicines work best, we must look into the different methods used to teach reading and ascertain the best approaches.

In summary, I believe that any discussion of illiteracy must address prevention along with remediation. And any discussion of prevention must take into consideration methods of teaching reading, particularly in the primary grades.

It was very interesting that not one witness at the first hearing, especially the representative of the International Reading Association, mentioned either teaching methods or Becoming a Nation of Readers. It is also interesting and, I must confess, puzzling to me that my legislation has been opposed by the chairmen of these hearings. I am glad, however, that Senator Stafford has reconsidered his decision of last April to plan no new initiatives on illiteracy until 1987 and is cochairing these hearings. I hope that both chairmen will also reconsider their support of my legislation.

Recently, Robert J. Samuelson wrote in Newsweek, "Our education debate is vapid because it avoids the issues that threaten the vested interests of educators." I urge the education subcommittees and the education community to address all the factors involved in the problem of illiteracy. To do any less is to doom even more of our children to reading failure.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Prepared statement of Hon. Edward Zorinsky follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD ZORINSKY, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, I am pleased that the education subcommittees of the House and Senate are addressing the issue of illiteracy, and read with interest the testimony of the witnesses at the first hearing. While I agreed with their observations about the seriousness of this problem, I was concerned about what was not said. I agree with the statement of William Woodside of the American Can Company that adult illiteracy will continue until our public schools reduce the number of graduates or dropouts they send into the ranks of adult illiterates. What we also need to ask is why the schools are graduating students who can't read. And I think if we ask why students are dropping out, we will find out that many are doing so because they are not learning to read and therefore not learning much of anything.

Dr. John Manning of the International Reading Association gave the following reasons for students leaving school without the ability to read: (1) not enough funding for Chapter 1 remedial programs and (2) a shortage of remedial reading teachers. But he made no mention of regular reading programs. Isn't it possible that if reading were taught properly in the first place, there wouldn't have to be so much remedial reading?

Dr. Manning also said that many students who cannot read are labeled handicapped by the schools. This is certainly true, and an issue we must address is the tragedy of mislabeling. Many children who were labeled learning disabled and even uneducable because they couldn't read were found to be normal after they were taught by different methods.

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In case you do not recognize it, this is an adaptation of the fairy tale, "The Shoemaker and the Elves," but it does not use the words "shoemaker" or "elves." It is an example of the "dumbing down" of textbooks because of readability formulas which limit sentence and word length and delete unfamiliar words. Some teachers blame a lack of pleasure in reading for poor reading skills, but I would be interested in finding our whether the lack of effective teaching has resulted in these formulas. If children aren't learning to read, an easy answer is to make the books simpler.

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We must also determine what methods do not work. The Chicago school system recently threw out its mastery learning reading program, after an outside study found that two-thirds of its ninth-graders were reading at an "apalling, low level." Many school systems still use this method. What is worse, several programs based on this concept are listed in the Department of Education's National Diffusion Network catalog of "Educational Programs that Work."

In proposing my legislation, I envisioned public hearings where advocates of both sides would have a chance to tell about their programs—which worked, and which didn't work—so that this information could be shared.

In summary, I believe that any discussion of illiteracy must address prevention along with remediation. And any discussion of prevention must take into consideration methods of teaching reading, particularly in the primary grades.

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Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Senator.

May I merely respond to one part of your statement? I think it was a very excellent statement. There seems to be some question about whether or not we should accept the idea, the proposal to create a commission rather than to proceed as the two bodies are now proceeding, with these hearings being the primary activity for several months. I know that we do have some difference on that issue, but it was certainly the position of the chair that we have these two subcommittees that are charged with the responsibility. And to take the position that we needed guidance necessarily from another commission might in some way delay a solution.

I think that some of the criticism that you directed at the kind of witnesses that we had in the first hearing is perhaps justified. However, this is merely the beginning, we assure you. I am confident that any witnesses that you would recommend that can get into the question of teaching methods and others will be highly acceptable to the members of this committee.

We had reports from about seven prestigious commissions in 1982 and 1983. We have the chairman of one of those commissions, Dr. Gardner, with us as the next witness, for example. Among the things we are interested in is whether or not recommendations that have already been made by these commissions—and certainly the Commission on Excellence in Education did make some rather specific ones—whether those recommendations are being carried out. Unfortunately, it seems to me that those of us in the Congress are the ones who are not implementing recommendations that have already been made. Until we get around, in my humble opinion, to acting on recommendations that have already been made that I think would take us a long way toward reducing illiteracy, it just seems to me that expecting a commission to solve the problem, rather than acting ourselves, is perhaps much more of a delay than it would be something constructive.

I offer to you the opportunity at any time to join the members of this committee in acting on what we already know. There are those who feel that we already know enough in the field of education to be doing a lot more than what we are now doing, but we are not applying what we already know. It was just that one judgment that we had rather than the creation of a commission.

Your proposal to create a commission is also before this committee. I certainly offer you the opportunity to convince us that it is desirable. I see no reluctance on our part to consider that proposal of yours.

Senator ZORINSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with you. I think working together we can accomplish a great deal. I just felt personally that in discussing the illiteracy problem, no consideration was being given to why students were not learning. In my view, I think no one has really addressed the problem of why teachers are not teaching. And that was the urgency for the consideration of my bill.

Inasmuch as it only had a $500,000 cost cap on forming that commission, and yesterday I understand the USIA reprogrammed $10 million of their hard earned tax money for a world's fair in Australia, I thought it was much more important to resolve the problem of illiteracy in the United States of America than to build a pavilion in Australia with $10 million.

I hope that we will have an opportunity to work together and support one another in getting to the bottom of what is causing our increased illiteracy in this country.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

Senator Stafford is with us now. I would yield to Senator Stafford in case he would like to make a statement at this point.

Chairman STAFFORD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am very glad to be here. I do have an opening statement, but in the interest of time I will ask that it be made a part of the record rather than delivering it.

I will say that I just came from the White House, where a meeting was supposed to terminate at 9:30, but a spirited discussion was under way at that point. It ran overtime quite a bit.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

Without objection, the statement will be entered into the record.

[Opening statement of Hon. Robert T. Stafford follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT T. STAFFORD, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

Today the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities is meeting with the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education in the second of a series of hearings on the problem of illiteracy in our country. These joint hearings address the increasing importance of the issue of illiteracy in our Nation. I commend Chairman Hawkins for his leadership in this joint venture.

Widespread illiteracy among American adults has recently come to the forefront of public attention. In many ways we have made remarkable progress toward improving literacy in our Nation. Yet despite Federal, public and private programs, the fact remains that 23 million American adults, or one in every five, are functionally illiterate as defined by the simplest test of everyday reading, writing and comprehension. In my home State of Vermont, 15 percent of those Vermonters who are age 16 and older lack functional literacy skills. It is clearly in our Nation's best interest to examine this serious problem in order that we find the best possible solutions.

Our subcommittee would like to extend a warm welcome to the witnesses today. We are especially pleased to have Senator Zorinsky with us. We look forward to your testimonies.

Chairman HAWKINS. Senator Simon.

Senator SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any statement. I want to commend you for your leadership.

I did not come from a meeting at the White House, incidentally. But I am pleased to have my colleague, Senator Zorinsky, here. I applaud his leadership in this area. It is extremely important.

I would just add, I put together a task force of leading educators, business people, and others in the city of Chicago on what could be done for the Chicago schools. One of the fundamental points is we have to have homes where parents can read and write so they can help their children. It is pretty basic, and we are ignoring the basics.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

Mr. Goodling.

Mr. GOODLING. Well, I wasn't at the White House either, but I would have added to that spirit of debate because I would have tried to bring up the issue of how we can get Donald Regan out of the White House. I think he's dangerous, but that has nothing to do with this.

Chairman STAFFORD. I might say, he was there.

Mr. GOODLING. I'm sure he was. He probably did most of the talking. He doesn't listen, either.

Senator, I haven't read your proposal. I will have to do that if you promise to read mine. I am trying to tackle this issue from both ends because I agree with the Senator who just spoke. Illiteracy has been with us forever. The difference now is that it is no longer acceptable, because there was a time you could be illiterate and still do a job. We are moving so rapidly and changing technology so rapidly that no longer is this acceptable. No longer can this be, and our economy is going to suffer. But if you are a first grade teacher and you have 30 youngsters come to you at 30 different levels of reading readiness, I will guarantee you that all the methods in the world would have to be used to try to bring a reading readiness program, first of all, to those youngsters before you can ever even get into the business of teaching the basics of reading.

If we could find some way to reduce that load to about six, perhaps that first grade teacher would have a fighting chance. In my bill I am trying to tie the two together, the parent and the youngster. If we don't find a way to somehow or other help that parent—and that's why I tried to do with title I money as an administrator. If we don't do that, then, of course, you are going to see the advertisements on television where the father is trying to read to the little girl and he can't read the words, and finally the little girl gives him the word that he can't read himself. That reading readiness and what happens in that home is so important.

I have always thought if we had more title I money and we used it in a home setting before the youngster ever got to school, we could not only help the youngster preparing them for formal education, but we could also help the parent, who doesn't know what to do to help their child proceed along a reading readiness program.

I am going to read your proposal. I hope you will read mine. There is no question, we have a lot to do and we don't have much time to do it in.

I appreciate your testimony and your interest.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

Mr. Kildee.

Mr. KILDEE. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you. Mr. Gunderson.

Mr. GUNDERSON. No questions, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, gentlemen.

Senator, I suppose that concludes the interrogation. Again we thank you for appearing.

Senator Stafford.

Chairman STAFFORD. If you will indulge me, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to apologize to my friend Ed Zorinsky for the fact that I was detained elsewhere and not able to hear him deliver his statement. But I will read it, Ed, I promise you.

Senator ZORINSKY. Thank you and for your presence. I appreciate your leadership in this issue, too.

Chairman STAFFORD. Thank you very much.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Senator Zorinsky.

The next witness is Dr. David P. Gardner, president of the University of California and the former chairman of the National Commission on Excellence in Education.

Dr. Gardner, we welcome you.

I would like to inform the committee that Dr. Gardner does have an 11 o'clock appointment with another subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee. We will try to accommodate his time. I will not go through the long process of introducing you, Dr. Gardner, but as a Californian as well as a co-chair of the joint hearings, I welcome you. Certainly the University of California system is one of the great educational systems in this country. Being at least a byproduct of one of the units of that system, I certainly take great pride in being in the chair to present you at this time. When I graduated from a little UCLA many years ago, I hardly realized that one day I would be sitting in this position to introduce and present to a committee the president of that great university. We are, I think, honored to have a great president being presented to this committee this morning. We certainly look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF DAVID P. GARDNER, PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. GARDNER. Thank you very much, Chairman Hawkins, for a very warm welcome and a most generous introduction, and Senator Stafford and members of the subcommittees.

Your prior witness had some comments to make about the Nebraska football team. I think, given the problems at UCLA this year, I will defer any further observations, Mr. Chairman, on that part of our work.

I am David Gardner, president of the University of California. I appreciate your invitation to testify at this joint meeting of your two subcommittees as you examine the problem of illiteracy in America. This issue demands the Nation's attention and action. I commend you on your efforts to address it.

My purpose this morning is to put the matter of illiteracy within the broader context of educational reform in the United States. Since the publication in 1983 of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report "A Nation at Risk," more than a dozen national reports have called for far-reaching reform in our educational system. The Nation's response to this call for reform has been clear, direct, and overwhelmingly on the side of major changes to improve schooling in America.

In fact, the first thing to be said about the educational reform movement is that it has achieved remarkable gains in a remarkably short time. Much of the reason, it seems to me, is that change occurred where it counts most: in States, localities, districts, and individual schools.

But the second thing to be said about the educational reform movement is that it is far from over. We are now in the process of coupling with more effect than in the past our educational aims, policies, programs, and practice. So, this is an excellent vantage point from which to look at aspects of educational reform that need more attention.

I believe there are several important issues that need to be addressed. All were included in "A Nation at Risk" but have received less attention than they might have or demand more attention than they seem to be getting.

First, "A Nation at Risk" called for improvement in the recruitment, training, and working conditions of teachers by recommending that teacher salaries be increased generally and that salaries be professionally competitive, market sensitive, and performance based. Many States and localities have tried hard to do so. But the gap between what teachers can expect to make and what other professionals with similar training and experience can earn is still unacceptably high.

Improvement is all the more important in light of predicted teacher shortages in some States and in some disciplines nationwide. At the same time, the need to recruit more teachers presents us with the opportunity to experiment with alternative routes to the teaching profession, an opportunity we should embrace. As a separate but related matter, we need to work harder on finding ways to evaluate teacher performance that are sufficiently sensitive and demonstrably objective.

Second, "A Nation at Risk" recognized that a rigorous program in the fine and performing arts ought to be a part of the education of our high school students. Moreover, we must dispense with the idea that these disciplines are somehow less serious in intent and execution than other kinds of courses. They are not frills and should not be regarded as such. We should give as much attention to the quality of instruction in the programs in the arts as we give to the quality in science and mathematics and English. This valuable dimension of the high school curriculum needs more attention, support, and encouragement.

Third, critics of "A Nation at Risk" have argued that our insistence upon rigorous standards and high expectations for students means that we run the risk of losing students to early failure and discouragement. We, of course, already are losing students to early failure and discouragement. But, on the contrary, raising standards means that we have to pay more attention than ever to the diversity of students in our classrooms.

Some States and localities have made strenuous efforts to pay attention to the differences among students while at the same time requiring high standards of performance, but more work needs to be done in this area. We need more information and more research on how students learn. Only by understanding that complex process can we give them the tools to take responsibility for learning throughout their lives.

Fourth, "A Nation at Risk" insisted on the fact that learning, despite its public aspects and its central importance to the public good, is essentially a private activity and demands student effort. Parents, teachers, school board members, legislators, and Governors can help. Only students can make learning happen. William Raspberry put it succinctly in a recent column: learning, he said, is not a passive exercise. It is not something that happens to you if you can get yourself into the right place. It is work. It may be relatively pleasant work for those lucky enough to love learning, but it is still work—close quote.

In connection with Congressman Goodling's comment, in the last pages of "A Nation at Risk," specifically pages 34 and 35 and the top part of page 36, we address a short note to parents; and we address a short note to students in which we set forth what we think are their respective obligations and responsibilities to improve the schools and learning in them.

It maybe a truism, but it is surely relevant to education and all too often overlooked. We must increase the ways by which we recognize student academic achievement, just as we recognize student athletic achievement. "A Nation at Risk," in fact, set as an overall goal of educational reform the creation of a learning society, defined as a commitment for all to seek and for education to offer, the opportunity to stretch their minds to full capacity through lifelong learning.

The idea of a learning society is not simply idealistic. It is eminently practical. The Nation needs skilled and educated people not only to meet the needs of our technological economy but also to make our complex democracy work through the creation of an informed citizenry.

Fifth, "A Nation at Risk" sought to define the appropriate role of the Federal Government in the task of educational reform. We recognize that our decentralized system of education meant that the principal responsibility for action lay with the States and local jurisdictions. But we believed there were functions the Federal Government in cooperation with States and localities is especially equipped to fulfill: meeting the needs of key groups of students such as the gifted and talented, the socioeconomically disadvantaged, and minority and language-minority students, protecting constitutional and civil rights for students and school personnel, collecting data about education generally, supporting curriculum improvement and research and teaching, learning, and the management of schools, supporting teacher training in areas of critical shortages or key national needs, and providing student financial assistance in research and graduate training.

Finally, we concluded, the Federal Government has the primary responsibility to identify the national interest in education. I refer you to pages 32 and 33 of "A Nation at Risk," where these recommendations are detailed.

Now that States and local jurisdictions have acted, now that it is clear from the national response to the education reports that major change is an important national priority, this is an especially appropriate time for those in the Federal Government to think about programmatic initiatives at the Federal level that can complement and reinforce the educational reform movement. I note recent efforts by the Department of Education to make the results of educational research more easily available to professional educators and to policy makers.

Given the momentum that has been built up by the educational reform movement—and I believe it is altogether fair and accurate to say that much of the impetus for this could be attributed to the tireless efforts of former Secretary of Education T.H. Bell and the vigorous personal involvement of President Reagan—given that momentum, buttressed by the longstanding commitment you and your colleagues in the Congress have to help improve education in our country, systematic and complementary programmatic initiatives by the Federal Government will now have a far greater impact than they could have had even 2 years ago.

The Congress and the President now have a special opportunity to build on what has already been accomplished across the Nation. I urge the Federal Government to move actively and confidently both to insure the reform movement's continuing success and to play its complementary role with the freshness of spirit and a sense of excitement fitted to this historic opportunity.

In thinking about the future of educational reform, one question, it seems to me, to be of paramount importance; and I close with this comment. Can we sustain the momentum for change that has been created in the past few years? We are now at a turning point. We have accomplished a great deal in the first flush of enthusiasm. What remains is to incorporate reform as a lasting element in our school system, no easy task.

Can we move from the assumption that educational reform is something we do every 25 years, to the conviction that it is and ought to be a continuing effort? If we can't do that, then at the least we need five more years of sustained effort, the minimum, in my opinion, for lasting reform to take hold.

Can we summon the energy and the interest to follow through on so many promising beginnings? A central message of "A Nation at Risk" was that, if we truly care about our society, as indeed we do, our economy, our future as a country and as a free people, we will find a way to do so.

I deeply appreciate your attention, the opportunity to appear before you today, and will be pleased to respond to questions for whatever period you wish.

[Prepared statement of David Gardner follows:]

Prepared Statement of David Pierpont Gardner, President, University of California

Chairman Hawkins, Senator Stafford, members of the Subcommittees, I am David Gardner, President of the University of California. I appreciate your invitation to testify at this joint meeting of your two subcommittees as you examine the problem of illiteracy in America. When the National Commission on Excellence in Educaton published "A Nation at Risk" two years ago, we pointed to the estimated 23 million functionally illiterate adult Americans as a significnt indicator of the serious educational, economic, and social problems facing our nation. A few months ago the Los Angeles Times put the number o functionally illiterate Americans closer to 27 million. Whatever the numbers—and precise figures are hard to come by—they are obviously too high. This problem demands the nation's attention and action, and I commend you on your efforts to address it.

My purpose this morning is to place the matter of illiteracy within the broader context of eductional reform in the United States. More specifically, I wish to speak about aspects of "A Nation at Risk" that have received less attention than they might have or that demand more attention than they seem to be getting. I hope that my discussion of this broader topic will assist you in your more focused consideration of illiteracy and what can be done about it.

NATIONAL REFORM EFFORTS

Since 1983 more than a dozen national reports have been issued on the condition and quality of schooling in America. And in the two years following their release we have seen a burgeoning school reform movement throughout the country. Although I do not believe the education reports created the national concern about education—it was the other way around, in fact—I do believe that the reports reflected and reinforced a growing national consensus that something had to be done to improve schooling in America. The nation's response to the call for reform has been clear, direct, and overwhelmingly on the side of the major changes in our system of education. And in fact the first thing to be said about the education reform movement, in my opinion, is that it has achieved remarkable gains in a remarkably short time.

Virtually every state, for example, has raised high school gradution requirements. Many have passed comprehensive educational reform legislation responsive to the issues of teacher status and compensation, standards for graduation and promotion from grade to grade, the content, scope and sequence of curricula, the quality of textbooks, programs to meet the special needs of gifted and disadvantged students, and the length of the school day and year. The business community nationwide has contributed enthusiastically to school reform, and a new generation of school-business cooperation is the result. Institutions of higher education have also taken steps to shoulder their share of responsibility for improving the schools—including my own institution, the University of California—and real partnerships between the schools on the one hand and colleges and universities on the other have begun to spring up.

We can point to some encouraging quantitative improvements as well. The long and precipitous decline in SAT scores appears to have been arrested, at least for the moment, and average scores are beginning to climb. Pass/fail ratios on state competency and graduation tests are improving. Teachers' salaries have gained significantly, if not to the degree that is desirable and indeed essential—a topic I will return to in a moment.

Given the magnitude of the problems American education faces, on the whole we have made tremendous strides. Much of the reason, it seems to me, is that change occurred where it counts most: in states, localities, districts, and individual schools. That is just what we hoped for when we wrote "A Nation at Risk." It was, after all, a report addressed as much to the American people as it was to the government. We were convinced that the answer lay not in national reports but in action by governors and legislators, by parents and students, by teachers and administrators and school board members—assisted by the Federal government in ways suggested on pp. 32-33 of the report.

But the second thing to be said about the educational reform movement is that it is far from over. The various reports and activities of the past two years have changed the educational atmosphere, and they are changing the definition of the problems the movement is now facing. We are now in the process of coupling with more effect than in the past our educational aims, policies programs, and practice. And so this is an excellent vantage point from which to look at issues that need more attention.

THE TEACHING PROFESSION: IMPROVEMENT AND AN OPPORTUNITY

"A Nation at Risk" called for improvement in the recruitment, training, working conditions, and salaries of teachers by recommending that teacher salaries be increased generally, and that salaries be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based. Several subsequent reports on teachers and teaching have reinforced the message that without a bright future for teaching, the future of educational reform will remain clouded. Many states and localities have appropriated and are appropriating money for salary increases, and some observers believe that this development is one reason for the relatively few teachers' strikes at the opening of school this year. Yet it is difficult, despite these efforts, to claim that the situation has improved as much as it needs to improve.

Just a few weeks ago, for example, the Los Angeles Times reported that overall increases in teachers' salaries have not kept them from varying widely from state to state and community to community. And according to a recent survey by the National Educational Association, average state salaries for teachers range from a low of $15,971 in Mississippi to a high of $39,751 in Alaska.

The point is not that we should have a national salary scale for teachers, but that some states and localities are still far behind in terms of realistic compensation for a demanding profession. And everywhere, even in the states that pay the highest salaries, a gap exists between what teachers make and what other professionals can expect to earn for similar training and education. If we are serious about attracting outstanding people to the teaching profession, we must see to it that the overall salary average continues to increase and that the gap continues to shrink. This is not an issue that failed to attract public attention—far from it—but it is an issue that has, so far, been incompletely addressed. It is all the more important to do so in light of predicted teacher shortages in many states and in a number of disciplines and areas.

At the same time, I would like to suggest that the need to recruit increasing numbers of teachers presents us with an opportunity. Some states and localities have defined or are considering alternative routes to teaching certification as a way of dealing with anticipated teacher shortages. One such route permits people with demonstrated competence in particular subjects to teach without extensive, formal pedagogical training. The National Education Association is unenthusiastic about this development, regarding it as a lowering of standards for the teaching profession. But the fact remains that the present arrangement is not working and we will be obliged to explore alternative paths to the teaching profession if the future demand for teachers is as great as now seems most likely. We should not, of course, assume that such alternatives are bound inevitably either for success or failure. But our uncertainty about the outcome should not render us unable or unwilling to try something new.

Research indicates, in fact, that good verbal ability—an ability the Scholastic Aptitude Test tends to measure—is correlated with effective teaching. And in recent years teachers education candidates have tended to score in the bottom quarter of those taking the SATs far more often than we would like. So it is possible that alternate certification requirement could attract more promising people into the profession and thereby *raise* standards. We have a naturally occurring experiment here, and perhaps a good opportunity to study that question to the benefit of the schools and the teaching profession alike. We should take the opportunity, not miss it.

"A Nation at Risk" recommended the use of performance-based merit pay and career ladders as a way of recognizing outstanding performance and keeping good teachers in the profession. A number of states and school systems are trying to develop these ways of evaluating and rewarding teachers. Their experience has underscored the difficulty of designing a process that will be fair and acceptable to everyone, but it has also shown that the difficulties are not insurmountable. I suspect that it will take a number of approximations before we arrive at a method of evaluating teachers that is sufficiently sensitive and demonstrably objective. Obviously, we need more research in this complex area. Yet many also believe that if principals, parents, and teachers can recognize good teachers, they can also express the basis for their judgments in some reasonable, fair, and objective manner. Ultimately, of course, the concerned parties—teachers, administrators, parents, students, and taxpayers—must all have confidence in the fairness, utility, and sensitivity of any proposed evaluation process. The fact that experiments are being tried, and that more and more schools are seeking to refine their evaluation procedures, is an enormously significant development.

It is imperative to restore the status of teaching as a profession, which means that teaching must have professional standards of competence, conduct, and accountability. The movement towards performance-based pay and career ladders is an attempt to do just that. I believe it deserves more support than it has so far received from everyone involved in education.

THE FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

Although "A Nation at Risk" did not recommend that the fine and performing arts be required among the New Basics (English, social studies, mathematics, science) the members of the Commission stressed the value of the arts and urged that the high school curriculum include them. And although the topic of the fine and performing arts has not been the center of much public debate, forty percent of the state legislatures have included the arts in their new definitions of graduation requirements. Ten states (and eleven programs—both the academic and diploma programs in Florida) require arts courses for graduation; nine other states require either an arts course or some alternative. Of the ten most demanding state diploma programs, seven require an arts course or an alternative, a figure that represents a slight increase in requirements in the arts.

The Commission believed that a rigorous program in the fine and performing arts ought to be a part of the education of our high school students. But if we believe that a good education includes the arts, then we must also believe that they should be as rigorous, demanding, and exciting as well-taught courses in science, history, or English. Moreover, we need to dispense with the idea that the fine and performing arts are frills or less serious in intent and execution than other kinds of courses. We should give as much attention to the quality of instruction and of programs in the arts as we give to quality in science and mathematics and English. This important part of the high school curriculum needs more attention, support and encouragement.

STANDARDS AND STUDENT DIVERSITY

The question of standards of performance was central to "A Nation at Risk." We recommended that schools, colleges, and universities "adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations, for academic performance . . . [to] help students do their best educationally with challenging materials in an environment that supports learning and authentic accomplishment (p. 27)." Critics have argued that by demanding higher standards we run the risk of losing students to early failure and discouragement. And some have also argued that greater standardization of the curriculum will be at the cost of lower-achieving students, who may well find tougher requirements in English or mathematics or science beyond their abilities or irrelevant to their future plans.

What these criticisms overlook is that "A Nation at Risk" did not argue or assume that a single standardized, comprehensive curriculum or a single educational experience would be right for all students. Nor did we assume that all students are the same. As a matter of fact, raising standards means that we have to pay more attention than ever to the diversity of students in our classrooms. It may also mean that we must provide more resources for tutoring, for developing different kinds of curricular materials, and for tailoring courses and assignments to the special needs of individual students. But recognizing the fact of differing levels of accomplishment and ability among students does not mean lowering standards for any or for all. To expect less than the best from all of our students is to condemn them to the worst kind of intellectual impoverishment: diminished expectations, which lead to the failure to develop individual student talents and abilities to the fullest.

Some states and some localities have made strenuous efforts to pay attention to the differences among students while at the same time requiring high standards of performance—some states and localities, but not enough. This is one area in which we need more research and more information on what works and what doesn't. I hope the Federal government will take the lead in disseminating this kind of information among the states.

LEARNING HOW TO LEARN

Another area that needs more attention is teaching students the skills of learning. There is a growing body of research that indicates these skills can be taught—that there are ways of teaching students habits, practices, and approaches that will help them to master not just a particular subject but whatever it is they are trying to learn. Traditionally, our schools have tended to leave such matters to the imagination and resources of the students themselves. Schools of education have not done as much research in this area, it seems to me, as its importance warrants.

Obviously, it is up to states and local schools to decide which research is relevant and what works best for individual students and teachers. But the Federal government has an important role to play in supporting promising research and experiments and in disseminating the results. John Gardner has said that "The ultimate aim of the education system is to shift to the individual the burden of pursuing his own education." One of the most effective ways we can do this is by helping or students learn how to learn. And it is within that context that the National Commission hoped our recommendations for improving the schools would be considered and implemented and what we called the "Learning Society" nurtured and encouraged.

THE CENTRALITY OF STUDENT EFFORT

The Commission also recognized that learning, despite its public aspects and its central importance to the public good, is essentially a private activity. All the good teachers and good programs and good intentions in the world can't make a student learn if he or she receives no encouragement at home, no stimulation to think and reflect, no direction about the importance of studying regularly and studying hard. William Raspberry emphasized this point in a recent column in the Washington Post. "Learning is not a passive enterprise," he said. "It is not something that happens to you if you can get yourself into the right place. It is work. It may be relatively pleasant work for those lucky enough to love learning, but it is still work." [1] These words echo the conclusion of much educational research—that the single greatest factor in student academic achievement is student effort. That sounds like a truism, but it is surely relevant to education today—and all too often overlooked. Parents, teachers, school board members, governors, legislators, and government can help. They can't make learning happen. Only students can do that.

Schools across the country are beginning to recognize and to give appropriate rewards to academic success, but surely we can do more. If we can put the spotlight on athletically able youngsters, we can bring an equal measure of attention and praise to academically outstanding students as well. The mechanism can be as time-honored as a word of praise from a teacher or specialized homework assignments or as innovative as giving students a letter for academic achievement in the same way we give letters for athletic achievement. The point is that we must reinforce the usual kinds of encouragement with tangible evidence that we mean what we say. The school and home environment must both reflect the same message: learning is important and rewarding.

A LEARNING SOCIETY

"A Nation at Risk" set as an overall goal of educational reform the creation of "a Learning Society." We defined this as a commitment for all to seek, and for education to offer, the opportunity "to stretch their minds to full capacity" through lifelong learning. The idea of a Learning Society is not simply idealistic; it is eminently practical. The nation needs skilled and educated people not only to meet the needs of our technological economy but also to make our complex democracy work through the creation of an informed citizenry. This in turn requires equal educational opportunity, high expectations of students, real opportunities for success and self-confidence, and appropriate support to face the challenges of schooling.

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[1] Washington Post, September 16, 1985.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

So far, at least, most of the leadership in the educational reform movement has come from state legislatures, elected officials, and committed persons from within the educational community itself. Yet it is primarily the teachers, principals, superintendents, and school boards who are responsible for implementing legislative initiatives. In some cases, unfortunately, the result has been conflict rather than mutual understanding and cooperation; not all teachers and school administrators have welcomed the legislation dealing with schooling that has been enacted over the past few years.

To some extent, at least, this is not surprising; no one expected total agreement over so complicated a subject as schooling. But one aspect is troubling. The New York Times recently reported the results of a Harris Poll of teachers that indicated a majority—sixty-three percent of those polled—believed that their views were not sought in shaping educational reform. At the same time, forty-two percent also believed that recent moves towards improving education had had a positive effect on students. What this may reflect, it seems to me, is a willingness to accept change if it clearly helps students and a desire to participate more fully in shaping what those changes are. What happens in the future will be colored enormously by the alignment of trust, judgment, and attitudes of professional educators and of the public and legislators who are seeking change. Needless to say, the best interests of all of us lie in the direction of mutual assistance and cooperation. But this is yet another aspect of the current reform movement that will need care, sensitivity, and attention.

THE FEDERAL RESPONSE

The National Commision assumed that, given the decentralized nature of our school system, primary responsibility for change lay with state and local jurisdications. And that is, as I have mentioned, the place where change has principally taken place. All of which is as it should be.

But we also envisioned a role for the Federal government. We tried to be explicit about that role in Recommendation E of "A Nation at Risk":

"The Federal Government, in cooperation with States and localities, should help meet the needs of key groups of students such as the gifted and talented, the socioeconomically disadvantaged, minority and language minority students, and the handicapped. . . . In addition, we believe the Federal Government's role includes several functions of national consequence that States and localities alone are unlikely to be able to meet: protecting constitutional and civil rights for students and school personnel; collecting data, statistics, and information about education generally; supporting curriculum improvement and research on teaching, learning, and the management of schools; supporting teacher training in areas of critical shortages or key national needs; and providing student financial assistance and research and graduate training. We believe the assistance of the Federal government should be provided with a minimum of administrative burden and intrusiveness."

Finally, we concluded, "The Federal Government has the primary responsibility to identify the national interest in education. . . . It must provide the national leadership to ensure that the Nation's public and private resources are marshaled to address the issues discussed in this report (pp. 32-33)."

Now that states and local jurisdictions have acted, now that it is clear from the national response to the education reports that major change is an important national priority, this is an especially appropriate time for those in the Federal government to think about how programmatic initiatives at the Federal level can complement and reinforce the educational reform movement. I note recent efforts by Secretary of Education William Bennett, for example, to improve the research function of the Department of Education and to make the results of educational research more easily available to professional educators and to policy makers. Given the movement that has been built up by the education reform movement—and I believe it is altogether fair and accurate to say that much of the impetus for this can be attributed to the tireless work of former Secretary of Education T.H. Bell and the vigrorous personal involvement and participation of President Reagan—given that momentum, systematic and complementary programmatic initiatives by the Federal government now will have a far greater impact than they could have had even two years ago. The Congress and the President now have a special opportunity to build on what has already been accomplished across the nation. I urge the Federal government to move actively and confidently both to assure the reform movement's continuing success and to play its complementary role with a freshness of spirit and sense of exciting fitted to this historic opportunity.

LOOKING AHEAD

In thinking about the future of educational reform in this country, one issue seems to me of paramount importance, and it is with this question that I would like to conclude. Can we sustain the momentum for change that has been created in the past few years? The educational reform movement in the United States is at a turning point. We have accomplished a great deal in the first flush of enthusiasm. What remains now is to incorporate reform as a lasting element in our school system, and that takes time, patience, and commitment. It will require that we change some attitudes and expectations. Can we move from the assumption that educational reform is something we do every twenty-five years to the conviction that it is, and ought to be, a continuing effort? If we can't do that, then, at the least, we need five more years of sustained effort—the mimimum, in my opinion, for lasting reform to take hold. We need to ask ourselves: Can we summon the energy and the interest to follow through on so many promising beginnings? A central message of "A Nation at Risk" was that if we truly care about our society, our economy, our future as a country and as a free people, we will find a way to do so. I deeply appreciate your attention and will be pleased to respond to questions.

Chairman HAWKINS. Let the chair first yield to Chairman Stafford for such questions as he may have.

Chairman STAFFORD. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your very good statement. Actually, there has never been, at least in front of this committee, a definition of illiteracy. I wonder if you would be willing to try your hand at giving us a definition of that subject.

Mr. GARDNER. I make no pretense at being an expert in this area. You can call before this commission people far more informed and knowledgeable than I. I will try to respond as best as I can, however.

Chairman STAFFORD. All right.

Mr. GARDNER. As is true of so many other things, the term tends to be used by different people to mean different things. For some it means an absolute incapacity to read or to write. There, of course, is a form of mathematical illiteracy. We shouldn't confine it just to reading. Nevertheless, we tend to think of it in terms of reading and writing. And there is an absolute incapacity on the part of some to read and to write.

There are, of course, those who can read and can write marginally but have considerable difficulty comprehending what they do read, or being able to express themselves in written form in any meaningful way.

The National Commission as it studied this issue tended to focus on what we called functional illiteracy. That is, persons who had a nominal capacity to read and to write but who had great difficulty, for example, in completing an application for employment, for example, by the U.S. Congress or by the University of California or by the city and county of San Francisco, who would have trouble reading the morning newspaper and either grasping the significance of the article or understanding many of the words.

With respect to that definition, our estimate was there were approximately 23 million American adults who were functionally illiterate by the simplest test of everyday reading, writing, and comprehension. And about 13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youth may run as high as 40 percent. So, the percentages, of course, will vary according to one's definition of this term.

Chairman Stafford. Thank you very much.

Mr. Gardner, you have been involved in the quest for excellence in our elementary and secondary schools. What are your views on the state of our postsecondary institutions?

Mr. Gardner. That is nearly as complex a question as the commission was asked to address with respect to the schools. I think it is not unreasonable to suggest that the quality of the graduate schools and professional schools in the United States is probably the best in the world.

The quality of our undergraduate programs is quite uneven across the country, enormous diversity of postsecondary education in the country, which suggests that that would be so.

For the better universities and colleges in the country, by and large, I think we do quite a good job at the junior and senior level, that is, when students move into their major. While we may do an adequate job and sometimes an excellent job, and sometimes an inadequate job for our lower division students, by and large, we do less well by them than I think we are capable of doing. Therefore, most of the criticism that we have been experiencing the last year with respect to the quality of undergraduate, especially lower division work, is not without warrant. And I think it is altogether proper that we be subject to accountability in this respect and do what we can to improve it.

Chairman Stafford. We are in——

Mr. Gardner. Excuse me, may I add, Senator Stafford, that to the extent we succeed in improving the overall level of education in the secondary schools, it will by definition have a positive impact on what we can do with our freshman and sophomore students, just as it will have an impact on what we can expect of students in the primary and elementary grades.

Chairman Stafford. We are in the middle of hearings on our Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities on rewriting the higher education program, which we probably will do next year. One of the questions being asked frequently of witnesses is, do you feel that the average student in college today is getting his or her money's worth? I guess your answer to that would be probably yes.

Mr. Gardner. It depends in part on how much they are expected to pay.

Chairman Stafford. In all candor, would you answer that yes in most instances?

Mr. Gardner. Yes; I think on average they are. I think there are exceptions. Some are receiving a good deal more than they are paying for, and others are not receiving their money's worth. On average I would say that it's fair return for the investment.

Chairman Stafford. Thank you.

I don't know what Senator Zorinsky said about Nebraska football, but it reminds me of the fact that I was down at the University of Georgia last year. One of their vice presidents said: "Senator, we want you to know that here at the university we are working hard to make this an institution our football team can be proud of."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. Senator Simon.

Senator SIMON. Thank you.

First of all, Dr. Gardner, if I were president of the University of California system, I would be very proud to have Congressman Hawkins as an alumnus of one of my schools.

Mr. GARDNER. Indeed we are.

Senator SIMON. Let me just ask the most basic question: If you were a Member of the U.S. House or U.S. Senate, what would you be doing to tackle this problem of illiteracy?

Mr. GARDNER. I think the first effort I would make would be to understand the scope and scale and character of the problem, that is, be clear on our definitions, determine to the extent we can, the origins and genesis of the problem itself, to what extent are the schools a contributor to or a part of the solution for this problem, how is it that such a high percentage of functional illiterates manage to find their way through the schools, certified as to level of competence they don't possess. We understand all the social pressures for that, but I think we need to understand the educational implications of it.

I think we should attempt to deal with the problem not by supposing that a lowering of standards or expectations or watering down of the curriculum of the school in general is a way of improving this problem; it is not, in my view. Indeed, I think it exacerbates it.

Discovering the relationship and the proportion of the weight that should be accorded to the variables, for example, which variables tend to overpower the others? Is it the home environment, the neighborhood environment principally? Or is it the school? Or is it an absence of opportunity? Does it have to do with the degree of rootlessness and mobility in the society? Even discrimination and prejudice, whether it's unconscious or informed. What parts of our society tend to be more afflicted than other parts of our society with this problem. What programs have succeeded. Which ones prove to be less effective.

That is how I think I would approach it, just as the National Commission, for example, for 1 year had no substantive discussions on the charter given to it. We met for 1 year listening to people. We had 18 members of that commission, very different people, different views, different perspectives, different experiences, different backgrounds, different biases, all coming to the table. If we had started to discuss at the outset the issue, I think we wouldn't have gotten very far. As it was, I tended to encourage them to say nothing and instead to listen. We did for a year.

At the end of a year, our differences, rather than being this wide, were only this wide and, therefore, manageable. We were able to focus on them.

Another point, it does seem to me, if we can get it out somehow, is a point that was made in the commission's report, if I may read one sentence. It is one page 7. We had been talking about the importance of improving education to the economic and social well-being of the society. We also indicated it includes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our society which knit together the very fabric of our society. The people of the United States need to know—and this is the point—that individuals in our society who do not possess the levels of skill, literacy and training essential to this new era will be effectively disenfranchised, not simply from the material rewards that accompany competent performance, but also from the chance to participate fully in our national life.

Students who drop out of school, for example, who are functioning at the margins of literacy and who have experienced the adverse circumstances that accompany that condition and who are still young sometimes have a rapport and a capacity to influence younger children to learn from their mistakes and to provide an incentive to them in terms of their own aspirations and hopes that might be useful. That is done in some drug programs and some other areas.

I do not pretend to be an expert in this area. I am giving you my best knowledge based upon my own limited experience.

Senator SIMON. I have no further questions. In response to Senator Stafford's question you mentioned the quality of higher education is, to a great extent, dependent on what is happening in secondary schools, and ultimately it depends on what is happening at home.

As you reflect on this, if you have some concrete proposals as to how we can move on this, for example, could we use college work study more effectively to have tutoring for literacy? Are there concrete ways in which you can use the tool of the University of California to move on what is a very fundamental problem in our society, a problem that is basically hidden at this point?

Mr. GARDNER. Senator, if this committee would welcome such suggestions, I would be very pleased to seek the advice of colleagues within the University of California who are especially competent in this area, couple that with the opinion of those who within the university are obliged to deal with this issue, and offer you my views on this in writing if you would welcome this.

Senator SIMON. We would be—I don't want to be speaking for my colleagues, but I think I can when I say we would welcome such suggestions.

Mr. GARDNER. I would be very pleased to prepare and send it to you.

Senator SIMON. Thank you, Doctor Gardner.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. We would join in that request also.

Mr. Goodling.

Mr. GOODLING. First of all, let me say, Mr. Chairman, that Dr. Gardner's excellence in the area of education is known beyond the borders of California. Having said that, I probably shouldn't make the next statement, but I have to in order to ask the question. I was watching a television program dealing with education last week. The statement was made that only 8 percent of the black graduates of California high schools were able to score high enough in the examination in order to be admitted into the California university system. After that statement was made, a very, very capable black teacher responded by saying, something to this effect: the greatest problem I have is to motivate my students, because they don't see a need to learn because their role models are millionaire entertainers and millionaire athletes.

My question is, Is there a role on the Federal level to do something to help that teacher? If there is, do you have any suggestions?

I guess I am getting into what I said before and what Senator Simon was saying in relationship to the home situation and the environment.

Mr. **Gardner**. So that I think the record will be clear on this, in California higher education is a highly rationalized enterprise. That is, we have three discrete segments of higher education: community colleges, which are open to all——

Mr. **Goodling**. I said the university system.

Mr. **Gardner**. Yes, but there are two of them.

Then there's the California State University system, which draws from the top one-third of students completing high school in California; and the University of California, which draws its student body from the top one-eighth, or top 12.5 percent. And it's the latter to which this 8 percent is made reference. I wanted to make that clear.

The University of California, of course, has been very concerned with this very issue, because a much smaller percentage of our student body is composed of minority students, black and Hispanic principally, than are reflected in the high school graduation pool generally, not to speak of the State's population as a whole.

The program we have found to be most effective in increasing the percentage and numbers of underrepresented minorities in the student body of the University of California is getting them when they are in the seventh grade, trying to identify promising young people in those underrepresented pools and working with them and the high school and the counselors and their teachers. We bring them to campus in the summer. We bring them on the weekends. We help tutor them. We help bring them along. For those young people so identified, the percentage qualifying for admission to the University of California is roughly twice the percentage of high school students who on average qualify for the University of California.

So, the salvage rate is quite high if it is personalized in that sense. Now, that will help us in the short run. It won't help us in the long run, because it is very difficult to expect that in the long run we will have success in this area if we only work on individual students who appear to have promise. We will be much better advised, it seems to me, as a strategic issue to try and improve that overall high school or junior high school, as the case may be, so that the learning environment is one reinforcing of and conducive to learning.

We all know the problems of discipline in the schools. We know the problems that these young people bring to the classroom, some of which are of their own making and some of which they have no control over. It is true that we have very few minorities on our faculties, and therefore there are few role models. And even a smaller percentage are moving from undergraduate into graduate school than from high school into our undergraduate programs.

With respect to the teacher, I can't give you in 2 minutes an answer to that. I think it is too complex a problem. I think there is no simple answer to it. It is enormously complex, and it will vary from ethnic group to ethnic group in terms of how one deals with it. I think it is a mistake to say underrepresented minorities and assume the approach to all is equally effective with respect to each of the parts.

I would like to point out, if I may, Congressman Goodling, that the problem is not going to get any better. I would like to quote from a very recent publication called All One System. It talks about the demographics of education, kindergarten through the graduate school, by Harold Hodgkinson of the Institute for Educational Leadership, just to give you a sense of why this problem rather than easing out will become, in my view, more acute. These are consequences for education bearing in on the purpose for which this hearing is held that arise out of demographic changes that we know are going to occur in this country.

One, there will be more children in the future than there has been in the past entering school from poverty households.

Two, there will be more children entering school from single-parent households, which means that the mother and/or the father, of course, is away most of the time.

Three, more children from minority backgrounds in the schools.

Four, a larger number of children who were premature babies, teenage pregnancies, leading to more learning difficulties in school.

Five, more children whose parents were not married, now 12 of every 100 births in the United States.

Six, more latchkey children.

Seven, more children from teenage mothers.

Eight, a continued drop in the number of minority high school graduates who apply for college, which has to do with the role model question.

Nine, a continued drop in the number of high school graduates concentrated most heavily in the Northeast and, of course, an enormous increase in minority enrollments in the Southeast, Southwest, and the Western States.

I could go on. But I think the fact that this committee is examining the issue of illiteracy, which cannot be considered, obviously, in isolation or absent the context of the educational system as a whole, is not only timely but crucial to the country, because the trends and forces at work in this society, if left undeflected and unattended, will cause us to be more, not less, concerned about this issue in the future than we have been in the past.

Mr. **Goodling**. Just two quick comments, I won't ask for any response because of time. I winced, of course, when you read some of the things in A Nation at Risk and included market sensitive pay. I winced simply because in the 11 years that I have been in the Congress of the United States, all that means is pay math and science teachers more money. And I never heard a first grade teacher mentioned or a second grade teacher mentioned. I never heard a reading teacher mentioned. I never heard a reduction in the pupil-teacher ratio in the first or second grade. It just means in the Congress of the United States you pay math and science teachers more money in order to get them. And that frightens me.

Mr. **Gardner**. Well, of course, we didn't say only that. We mentioned a number of other things.

Mr. **Goodling**. I know.

Mr. **Gardner**. With respect to that point, if I may, the statistics are clear. Math and science teachers are leaving the profession four to five times faster than they are being replaced. The present system is not going to yield up a solution. Now, how we deal with it is a source of enormous contentiousness and debate, but I think we need to address it.

If market sensitive pay is not the answer, there needs to be another one. In the University of California and in most universities, for example, we pay professors who are in medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, law, business and engineering more than we pay other members of our faculty. Now, that is a source of some irritation within the faculty, that we either pay more or we don't offer those programs.

Mr. **Goodling**. Yes, of course, that's a totally different system than when you're talking about an elementary teacher where the English teacher has to teach 200 youngsters a day, 90 percent of which would prefer not to be there, and the math and science teacher and the advanced courses may have eight or nine in their class, all of which want to be there. I realize the problem. All I am saying is, in the Congress of the United States I have never heard it mentioned that you are talking about reading teachers or first grade teachers or second grade teachers when you talk about that.

We have got to attract the brightest and best. If I had the time, I would ask you to tell me about teacher education programs, because you seem to indicate that, once you get them to juniors and sophomores, they are getting their money's worth. You have got to attract the brightest and best to the field of education. It is going to take a lot of money to do that. But after they get there, they can't be killed in the teacher education program like so many teachers that have their enthusiasm destroyed. If it isn't all destroyed in the teacher education program, depending who the building principal is, it probably will be once they get into the profession.

Mr. **Gardner**. I agree, it's a very real problem. The National Commission held a full hearing on that very point. There are some commission papers and some other testimony that we had on that which may be of interest to you, referred to in the appendix of this report. It is a crucial problem and why I paid as much attention to it as I did.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, on market sensitive pay—we put a paragraph in our report which talked about performance based pay and market sensitive pay. It is in the same sentence. We put it in the same sentence deliberately because, if you have an English teacher, for example, who is superb and a math teacher who is mediocre, the criticism, of course, of market sensitive pay is that, what is the fairness of paying the mediocre math teacher more than a superb English teacher? My answer to that is that's one reason we recommended performance based pay, so you can recognize the superb English teacher, irrespective of the field taught.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Mr. Williams.

Mr. **Williams**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Gardner, illiteracy in its depth is obviously a national problem. It certainly crosses State lines. We are, of course, struggling with what the appropriate Federal role is in trying to stem it.

Surely, you have thought that through some, as we have. Can you give us a definition, place some parameters around what would be the appropriate Federal role in trying to attack in a concerted way this problem of illiteracy among Americans?

Mr. **Gardner**. I will try to respond to that, first, by reference to part of the commission's report. I might add this was a strictly nonpartisan group. Pages 32 and 33 define what we think is an appropriate role for the Federal Government. Let me draw from one part of it.

We believe the Federal Government's role includes several functions of national consequence, that States and localities alone are unlikely to be able to meet: protecting constitutional and civil rights for students and school personnel, collecting data, statistics and information about education generally, and so forth, and so on; supporting teacher training programs, an area of critical shortage, or key national needs, and providing student financial assistance and research and graduate training.

We regard that as clearly within the national interest and therefore clearly within the purview of the Federal Government's responsibilities.

Now, if you look on page 32, paragraph 3, we talk about the role of the Federal Government in cooperation with the States. It would be within that paragraph that I would like to address this issue: the Federal Government in cooperation with the States and localities, should help meet the needs of key groups of students such as the gifted and talented, the socioeconomically disadvantaged, minority and language-minority students, and the handicapped. In combination with these groups include both national resources and the Nation's youth who are most at risk.

We tried to point out, perhaps inadequately, that we expect a higher level of performance. As the curriculum in the high school tends to become more rigorous, that in turn implicating what is expected at the primary and elementary grades, we do run the risk of making the dropout problem and the problem of illiteracy more acute rather than less. Therefore, it seems to me both the States and the Federal Government in a partnership effort here need directly to discover ways and means of addressing this problem.

I think it is not correct to say that this is the sole responsibility of the State or local school districts. I think it is altogether proper to say that the Federal Government has a legitimate and authentic role to play here.

Now, exactly what the parameters of that should be, the scale and scope of the effort, the targeted groups, at what point in the educational system, what home environments might be modified in ways that help mitigate this problem, are all issues that were brought up before you came in and to which I indicated I would be happy respond to in writing and which warrant a more careful crafting of a response than I am able to give here.

Mr. **Williams**. Well, those are, of course, the policy questions that we are currently wrestling with. We have a dilemma. The country seems to be twisting away from Federal innovation, other Federal attempts at getting at major national problems. That twisting is signified both by what goes on at the White House and result in votes here on the Hill, House and Senate. Yet, it seems clear from all of the evidence that we can gather and the testimony we hear that the most thoughtful among us agree that there has to be an aggressive partnership innovatively designed between the Federal Government and the States.

I am wondering if that is running in the face of having the Federal Government do less. I think I am just about convinced that, had the Federal Government paid more attention to this problem of illiteracy back in the 1960's, at which time we were giving a lot of consideration to other education problems such as civil rights and access, we would not have the illiteracy problem we have today. Our dilemma is that this is today, and politically it's the toughest day in the last half century in which to bring the Federal authority to bear in trying to solve our problem.

So, the politics are standing in the way of this thing.

Mr. **Gardner**. Let me offer a comment intended to be helpful in that respect. The thrust of our report A Nation at Risk was to address the message as much to the American people as it was to address the message to Government.

Mr. **Williams**. That's why it was a bestseller.

Mr. **Gardner**. I think that's why it worked. That was the audience.

So, we wrote this report having the average citizen of this country in mind. So, we wrote it in everyday English. We kept it brief. We didn't complicate it with jargonese. We just wrote a straightforward letter: Here are the indicators of the problem we have; here's how we've gotten from where we were to where we are; and here are some suggestions for how we might get out of it.

That provoked, together with other reports issued about the same time, as much momentum for change in the educational system as we have had for at least a generation.

I think that if the Federal Government had come in in a very aggressive way at that point, at the time this report was issued, we would have run a risk of some States, perhaps more than we would be comfortable with, believing that, well, the Federal Government is going to come in and take care of this problem, and we're off the hook. The fact that the Federal Government did not respond with large-scale programs put the burden, in my view, where it principally belonged.

Now, they have responded. Local school districts, States, legislators, Governors, State school boards, the various teaching and academic professions have responded, albeit unevenly, nevertheless, more overwhelmingly than any of us would have supposed.

It does seem to me now, therefore, given that, that it is altogether timely for the Federal Government against the backdrop of this change to try and identify those aspects of the reform movement where it is unlikely to anticipate major progress being made by the States alone. This is one area, the illiteracy area, because the scale and scope of it is so enormous. And then to try, against that backdrop, to identify a role and place for the Federal Government working with the States such that their combined efforts will result in a more positive and constructive outcome than if either were attempting to do it unilaterally.

My own view is that we are more likely to be successful approaching it from a Federal perspective with that arrangement in mind than if the Federal Government were to try and do this on its own without regard to the efforts underway in the States as a whole. I do think that the complexity of this problem, its social and economic origins, and the relationship of the school system to it, and the various programs that are intended in both social and educational spheres now funded by the Federal Government are such as to warrant clear Federal involvement. It does not, in my view, warrant a Federal role independent of the efforts of the State; otherwise, I think we will tend to be at cross-purposes.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

The Chair will forgo any questions, Dr. Gardner. I don't want you to believe, however, that it is a lack of response to your excellent statements that you have made this morning before the committee. I think we have richly benefited from hearing from you as chairman of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. I understand the other committee is awaiting your presence. We will therefore at this point excuse you.

Again, we express the appreciation of the joint committees for your wonderful constructive approach, the update you have given us in regard to what the States and other officials are doing. I think that it certainly sets a new focus for the committee. We certainly appreciate your attendance.

Mr. **Gardner**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committees. I appreciate both those kind words, Mr. Chairman, and the opportunity to share these thoughts with you. I commend both committees, you and your colleagues, for addressing this issue, which is really crucial to the well-being and future of our country.

I thank you for a chance to participate.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you.

The next witnesses will consist of a panel comprising Dr. Richard C. Anderson, professor and director of the Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois; Dr. Samuel Banks, national president, Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc., who is accompanied by Dr. Herman Brown, professor of psychology, University of the District of Columbia; and Dr. Thomas G. Sticht, adjunct research professor of industrial psychology, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.

Would those gentlemen be seated at the witness table?

Senator Simon.

Senator **Simon**. Thank you. Let me apologize to the witnesses in advance and particularly to Dr. Anderson from the State of Illinois. I have another meeting. I have to be over on the Senate side in a few minutes, but I will read your statements, and commend you on your efforts to address this problem.

Chairman **Hawkins**. You have never been disagreeable, Senator. Thank you.

We will call on the witnesses in the order in which they were introduced, beginning with Dr. Anderson.

STATEMENTS OF RICHARD C. ANDERSON, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS; SAMUEL L. BANKS, NATIONAL PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRO-AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY, INC., ACCOMPANIED BY HERMAN BROWN, PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; AND THOMAS G. STICHT, PRESIDENT, APPLIED BEHAVIORAL AND COGNITIVE SCIENCES, INC., ADJUNCT RESEARCH PROFESSOR, U.S. NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, MONTEREY, CA

Mr. ANDERSON. I am Richard Anderson. I am director of the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois. This center is sponsored by the National Institute of Education. I thank you for the honor and privilege of presenting testimony.

I suppose I am obliged to say something about football, though, if you're from Illinois, you're really depressed about football these days. In fact, I think the only fans more depressed about football are the fans of the Washington Redskins.

In the brief time allotted to me, I cannot go deeply into the topic which has occupied my entire professional life, namely, the study of illiteracy and the conditions in the home and the school that promote the development of high levels of reading skill. What I would like to urge you to do is read this report. I was very pleased to see that Representative Goodling already has a copy in his hands. As chairman of the commission that produced the report, I am proud to say that it has been widely acclaimed as the most authoritative statement available on literacy. It is only 32,000 words. You are all skilled readers. I would estimate that you could read material of this density with comprehension at at least 200 words a minute. That would be about 160 minutes. Allowing for a few breaks and time for reflection, you ought to be able to get through it in 3 or 3½ hours. I commend it to your attention.

I am going to make three points. They are rather simple points, might even be thought to be obvious, but I think they do provide a foundation for Federal policy in the area of literacy.

The first point is the most obvious of all. That is the Federal Government ought to make literacy, reading in particular, the cornerstone or the highest Federal education priority. This seems obvious. We all know that reading is the cornerstone of excellence in education, that it's critical for our society, that it's critical for individuals. We all know at least if we have had a child in our own family so afflicted that a failure to learn to read is a family tragedy.

I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that a failure to learn to read is the educational equivalent of cancer. Why then do I say make sure the priority is on literacy and reading in particular? In my experience over a number of years, whereas lip service is given to reading, when the pie gets sliced, reading somehow doesn't get as large a share as it ought to, considering its importance. So, I would urge you in your roles in budgeting authorization appropriation oversight to make sure that reading does get the priority it deserves.

In the area in which I am most familiar, funding of research in the field of reading, unfortunately I was unable to get together statistics that would portray the whole Federal picture, but with respect to reading research presently, the National Institute of Education spends only about 4 or 5 percent of its budget on reading.

Many issues of lesser importance get as much money. Why does this happen? Well, here's one possibility. I think there is a tendency in Federal decisionmaking for every little special interest group to get something, for every issue to get at least some attention. This means we are not putting our bucks where our priorities are.

My second point is, be sure you don't imagine that there is a single answer to the literacy problem. I know you don't really believe that, but somehow we have crusades to deal with only a single aspect of the issue. Please permit me to quote from my report, "Becoming a Nation of Readers." Based on what we now know, it is incorrect to suppose that there is a simple or single step which, if taken correctly, will immediately allow a child to read. Becoming a skilled reader is a journey that involves many steps. Similarly, it is unrealistic to anticipate that some one critical feature of instruction will be discovered which, if in place, will assure rapid progress in reading. Quality instruction involves many elements. Strengthening any one element yields small gains. For large gains, many elements must be in place.

Now, I do not include in my written testimony but I will add here briefly that it is not a mystery what these elements are. We need good teachers well trained. We need much better books for our children than the publishing industry is now providing. We need more access to library books, both fiction and nonfiction, particularly for poor children. We need teachers who teach using content and method based on best knowledge now available. In our best classrooms that happens, but in many classrooms it does not.

We need schools with an ethos that supports literacy, where literacy gets as high a priority as the performance of the athletic teams and the performances of the band, the orchestra, and the chorus. We need order and discipline, collegiality. We need opportunities for advancing knowledge and continued renewal on the part of teachers.

So, it is not a mystery what these elements are.

My final point is, invest in early childhood and primary school education. I recognize that the tacit thrust of these hearings is on adult literacy, and it surely is wise social policy to reform high schools, to improve colleges, and to take any steps we can to eliminate adult illiteracy. However, several different lines of research quite clearly establish that a society gets a better yield, a bigger yield from an investment in early childhood and primary school education.

Let me briefly recount the evidence. First of all, there is the work in human capital formation that began with the work of the Nobel prize laureate, Theodore Shultz, at the University of Chicago. This clearly establishes that society gets a greater return on investment in the form of human capital, that is, knowledge, skill, and ability with enduring value for an investment in the early years of schooling. It gets greater returns for investment there than it does in the later years of schooling.

Second, we now have good long-term data showing quite strong benefits from quality early education programs. These include, of course, improved test scores, but probably more important are what are seen on a broader array of social indicators like increased high school graduation, increased college attendance, reduction in delinquency, truancy, crime, teenage pregnancy, dependence on welfare.

So, my final point, to sum up then, in education it does seem to be doubly true that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Those conclude my prepared remarks. I would be delighted to entertain questions.

[Prepared statement of Richard Anderson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD C. ANDERSON, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

My name is Richard Anderson. I am Director of the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois. The Center is sponsored by the National Institute of Education. Thank you for the honor and the privilege of presenting testimony.

In the five minutes allotted me, I cannot go deeply into the causes of illiteracy or the conditions in the home and school that promote high levels of skill in reading and the related language arts. To get a fairly deep, but also concise and readable treatment of these issues, may I urge you to read the report, "Becoming a Nation of Readers"? As chairman of the commission that produced the report, and one of its principal authors, I am proud to say that it has been widely acclaimed as the most authoritative statement available on literacy. You can read the report in less time than this hearing will take.

I have three points.

1. MAKE READING THE HIGHEST FEDERAL EDUCATION PRIORITY

Reading is the cornerstone of excellence in education and beyond. Reading is basic to all other achievement, whether in the sciences, in business, in government, or in the arts. Taking the perspective of the society, a nation of non-readers is not fit to choose its own leaders or make its own laws, and it will not long continue to compete successfully with other societies during the Information Age. Taking the perspective of the individual, a child who is a non-reader is a family tragedy; it is not an exaggeration to say that a failure to learn to read is the educational equivalent of cancer.

But I know that you already know that there are good and sufficient reasons why reading is the first of the three Rs. Why, then, do I remind you of the centrality of reading?

The answer is that over a period of many years my experience has been that reading seldom gets weighted in proportion to its importance in Federal decisionmaking. One of the reasons for this fact is the way that government decisionmaking works: Every little special interest group gets something; every issue, big or small, receives at least some attention. I do not suppose that education is any more Balkanized than other fields, so I do not intend this as a special criticism of the Federal education establishment, past or present. Still, because of a false even-handedness, when the pie is sliced, reading gets a smaller piece than it ought to have considering its importance.

As a citizen, I do not expect members of Congress to be experts on such matters as whether the short *a* sound should be taught before the long *a* sound, but I believe I should be able to expect the Congress to use its powers of budgeting, authorization, appropriation, and oversight to assure that reading gets attention commensurate with its importance as a national priority.

Specifically, as a reading researcher, I believe that the Congress should encourage the National Institute of Education to spend $4-5 million a year, or approximately 8-10% of its present annual budget, directly on reading research (in addition to monies spent on such topics as writing and effective elementary schools that may contribute indirectly to knowledge about reading). About half of this money should fund a strong national center for reading research, the remainder a program of smaller, shorter term projects.

2. BEWARE OF SIMPLISTIC SOLUTIONS

I have already compared a failure to learn to read with cancer. Like cancer, reading failure provokes strong reactions. People have passionate convictions about the cause of reading failure and its cure. Sometimes these beliefs are clearly wrong; usually, at best, the beliefs represent an incomplete understanding of reading and reading instruction.

As we wrote in "Becoming a Nation of Reading," "Based on what we now know, it is incorrect to suppose that there is a simple or single step which, if taken correctly, will immediately allow a child to read. Becoming a skilled reader is a journey that involves many steps. Similarly, it is unrealistic to anticipate that some one critical feature of instruction will be discovered which, if in place, will assure rapid progress in reading. Quality instruction involves many elements. Strengthening any one element yields small gains. For large gains, many elements must be in place." (p.4)

3. INVEST IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

It is surely wise social policy to work toward reforming high schools, improving colleges, and eliminating adult illiteracy. However, if resources are scarce and hard choices must be made, research strongly suggests that there is a better yield from investments in early education, when children are beginning to learn to read. Economics research on human capital formation establishes that a society receives a greater return on investment in elementary education than investment in later years of schooling. Long-term educational research shows that quality early education for children at-risk for educational failure produces an array of lasting benefits[1] including increased test scores, increased rates of high school graduation and college attendance, and reduced rates of special education referral, delinquency, crime, teenage pregnancy, and dependence on welfare. Moreover, the research suggests that early education is more effective and less costly than programs to cure problems once they have arisen.

Thus, in education it appears to be doubly true that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. There is no substitute for quality early education that gets all, or most, children off to a good start in learning to read.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you, Dr. Anderson. We will wait until the other witnesses have had an opportunity to present their statements.

May I again remind the witnesses that all of the statements presented to the committee will be in the record. I think we can better deal with the subject if we can summarize or can pull out of the statements the highlights so as to give sufficient time for questioning as well as a presentation made by the witness.

The next witness is Dr. Samuel Banks. Dr. Banks, we welcome you before the committee.

Mr. **Banks**. Good morning, Chairman Hawkins, Senator Stafford, and members of the joint Subcommittees on Education. I am delighted to appear before you this morning in my capacity as the National President of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History.

Let me, too, Mr. Chairman, indicate that I am delighted that in 1984, a little over a year ago, I appointed a national task force entitled "Excellence in Education, a Black Perspective." The person who was asked to chair that committee is present with me this morning. I would like to present him to this committee, Dr. Herman Brown, who is a distinguished professor of psychology at the University of the District of Columbia and also Director of Continuing Education at the University of the District of Columbia.

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[1] The recent review suggesting that Headstart has short-term but not long-term benefits is probably attributable to the fact that programs of lesser quality were included in the review, and that the research in many of the studies covered was too weak to reveal long-term benefits.

I would also mention, Mr. Chairman, in close propinquity to you, that a member of your committee on her own time rendered selfless and significant service as a member of the national task force, Dr. Harris. I believe you know her. We are grateful that she served on her time and at sacrifice as a member of the national task force, among others.

Mr. Chairman, in keeping with what you indicated, I will encapsulate my remarks, since you have the prepared statement that you have indicated will become a part of the record. We are appreciative of that. So, I will not read the statement which has been disseminated to you.

I would make, Mr. Chairman, and consonant with the statement that has been prepared, three points. One is that, as we look at the various task forces relating to literacy and the amelioration of education across our Nation and in particular the report "A Nation at Risk," and we just heard the chairperson of that task force speak to that, that of the 13 or so reports today, the latest being the CED, the Committee for Economic Development's report, none of those reports, Mr. Chairman and members of these joint subcommittees, address a population that is on the verge of being pushed off the precipice, namely, over 9 million black children in our Nation's public schools who run the risk of being denied equal educational opportunity in our Nation.

When we talk about the question of illiteracy, as you well know, over 24 million in our Nation, blacks who make up 12 percent of our national population of approximately 237 million, represent over 50 percent of those who are illiterate or marginal or who are shut out of the economic, social and, I would say, too, the political mainstream of our Nation. If you take blacks and Hispanics together, they are disproportionately represented in terms of pushouts, the noneducated, those viewed as nonteachable, and in special education.

I would say, Mr. Chairman, until we make the commitment, a sustained and concentrated commitment, that we are going to educate these youngsters, sequestered largely in urban school districts such as New York and Boston and Baltimore and Washington and Los Angeles, Chicago, and so on, we will not have excellence in education nor will we eviscerate or extirpate, to be more specific, the matter of illiteracy in our Nation. The fact of the matter is, although we have made a national statement in relation to equality of educational opportunity, we have not in terms of demonstrable resources, monetary and human, made the commitment.

I would say here as a very crucial point that we have made the question of equality of educational opportunity for all of our youngsters, 41 million in the 16,000 school districts of our Nation, really a travesty. And we have not made the commitment as we did in 1945, when Europe was devastated by war, to turn the lights on in the metropolitan urban centers in our Nation, but the poor and dispossessed and excluded, the miserables, if you will.

In support of what I have indicated, Mr. Chairman, we have submitted to you a voluminous report that we prepared on "Excellence in Education, A Black Perspective," for your reading. Second as a part of this testimony, we submit 25 specific recommendations as to how do we ameliorate and turn the lights on, if you will, for those who have been historically left out because of institutional racism and institutional exclusion that our Nation supported.

The second point, Mr. Chairman, that becomes very crucial is recommendation one. I would just read this as it is: Full and equal financial support for Federal, State, and local governments. Mr. Chairman, I submit we have not made that commitment. Even as we talk about reforms and a proliferation of reforms, unless the human and monetary resources are present, we will not have excellence in fact that all of our children and youths in this Nation need and deserve.

I made this point, Mr. Chairman, in a meeting on Friday with a group of national black leaders to the Secretary of Education, William Bennett. That really is chimerical, offensive to talk about excellence in the abstract. On the one hand, in urban school districts we are being exhorted to do more with less. In the very affluent school districts, there is even more being spent. That kind of transmogrification, if you will, or burlesque of excellence, needs to be ended now.

Two other points I would make in closing: that is, as I have said before, there must be a sustained and concentrated effort to provide equity and excellence in education. When we talk of 37 million black Americans, we must keep in mind we are talking about recent history. We go back to 1964, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and the 1968 Housing Act. Those are extremely crucial, Mr. Chairman, because unless we deal with this issue holistically, housing, health care, nutrition, the quality of teachers, the quality of curriculum, teaching methodologies, and the quality of life in the community, we will not be able to deal with these matters in an effective and substantive way.

My final point, Mr. Chairman, is a comment that was made, a very significant comment by a former Secretary of Education, John Gardner. He said, and I quote, in his book "Excellence":

> A nation is never finished. You can't build it and then leave it standing as the pharaohs did the pyramids. It has to be recreated for each generation by believing, caring men and women. It is now our turn. If we don't care, nothing can save the nation. If we believe and care, nothing can stop us.

Mr. Chairman, I repeat a constancy of my testimony. We have to truly care and act in support of equity and equality of opportunity for all Americans. A child's social class, race, ethnicity, where he or she lives, or point of national origin must not be the primary determinant as to whether he or she receives the highest quality of education our Nation can achieve. It is decidedly in our national interest, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, I submit, to move forward affirmatively, fairly, and speedily.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Samuel Banks follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. SAMUEL L. BANKS, NATIONAL PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRO-AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY, INC., SUPERVISOR, OFFICE OF SOCIAL STUDIES, BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Chairman Augustus F. Hawkins and Robert T. Stafford, respective Chairmen of the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education and Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities: I am profoundly honored, grateful and pleased to have been invited to appear before these august subcommittees of the United States House of Representatives and Senate to address the urgent and proliferating problems of illiteracy and urgent steps necessary to ameliorate "basic skills of Black students." You and your colleagues have rendered a major contribution to our nation in holding these hearings in order to provide succor and educational uplift for the educationally excluded, dispossessed and alienated in our nation.

Mr. Chairmen, as you and the members of these subcommittees are fully aware, the existence of over 24 million functional illiterates in our nation, disproportionately Black and Hispanics, constitutes a national disgrace. This lamentable and appalling condition exists in the most prosperous nation in the world because we have not made a demonstrable commitment to end this scourge (i.e., illiteracy) of our nation. There is, to be sure, a painful socio-racial nexus between poverty and educational attainment. Most functional illiterates in our nation are white, but Black and Hispanics represent the largest percentage of the poor and functional illiterates.

This morning, Mr. Chairmen and members of the joint House and Senate Subcommittees on Education, I speak in the capacity of national president of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc. The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, Inc., (ASALH) founded by the late Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson on September 9, 1915 in Chicago, is a national organization of Black historians, educators, academicians and lay people committed to serious research, study and dissemination of information on Black life and culture. Dr. Woodson's seminal work, "The Mis-Education of the Negro," published over 50 years ago represents a potent and enduring work focusing on the critial needs of Black children and what is needed for enhancement and substantive improvement.

Mr. Chairmen, as one reviews the 16,000 school districts in our nation serving over 41 million students, especially urban children and youths, the disquieting reality of the mis-education, under-education, and non-education of Black and poor children continues in a nation with a Gross National Product in excess of $2 trillion. This situation prevails in spite of the valiant, sacrificial and heroic efforts of educators in large urban school districts such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, Richmond, Virginia, Los Angeles and other urban school districts. The linchpin necessary for demonstrable excellence and equal educational opportunity boils down to a national commitment and requisite human and monetary resources. Until a sustained and concentrated national commitment is made to close the historic socio-racial and fiscal chasm between urban and suburban school districts, separate and unequal education will continue in our nation. The socio-economic pathologies which flow from this lamentable situation as reflected in school dropouts, now approaching 2 million a year, crime and other deviant behavior will accelerate and expand. The end result will be a further fiscal and human drain on the body politic.

It, too, is significant to observe, beginning with the "Nation at Risk" report warning the nation of a "rising tide of mediocrity" and eleven other major reports that Black Americans except in a tertiary or peripheral manner were largely ignored or relegated to the national back burner. If it had not been for the reports of the National Alliance of Black Educators and the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASALH) the doleful and shoddy state of the preponderant number of over 9 million Black children and youths would have been consigned to further indifference and neglect.

Mr. Chairmen, I am heartened and encouraged that when I appointed ASALH's national task force on "Excellence in Education: A Black Perspective," in Washington, D.C., in October, 1984 chaired by Dr. Herman Brown, distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of the District of Columbia, the educational needs of Black children and youths were given recognition. Dr. Brown was joined by Mrs. Elizabeth Edmonds, Principal of Northern Senior High School, Baltimore, Md.; Dr. Gwendolyn Cooke, Principal of the Lemmel Middle School, Baltimore, Md.; Dr. June L. Harris, Legislative Analyst, House Education and Labor Committee; Dr. Samuel L. Banks, national president of ASALH and Supervisor of Social Studies, Baltimore City Public Schools. Each of these highly respected educators, on their own time and without pay, rendered distinctive and selfless service. Our report, "Excellence in Education: A Black Perspective," contains 72 recommendations and 15 basic conclusions in terms of what we deem is critical for the resuscitation and revitalization of urban education. A central thread that pervades our report is that equality of educational opportunity should be made available now to all of our children and youths.

I am providing the following specific recommendations, as matters of urgency for the consideration of the subcommittees:

1. Full and equal financial support by Federal, state and local governments.

2. Full and vigorous enforcement of the *Brown* decisions of 1954-1955 and subsequent Federal court decisions in support of equal educational opportunities.

3. Concentrated emphasis on multiethnic and multicultural education, in all subject areas, that accentuate positive self-concept and analytical thinking. Multiethnic education should be mandated by school board policy.

4. Requirement that all textbooks, especially in science, English, history and social science classes and fine arts classes (i.e., art and music) be multiethnic.

5. Requirement that textbook publishers utilize Black and minority writers in the conceptualization and writing of textbooks and instructional materials. School boards should establish this as a matter of policy.

6. Insistence on high quality education at all levels (i.e., elementary, secondary, higher education). The concept of custodial education or simply keeping children and youths from downtown or off the street must be ended now.

7. Work in concert with Black churches, civic groups, sororities, fraternities and social groups to reestablish a sense of community and caring.

8. Assiduous efforts to support and maintain high quality predominantly Black institutions of higher education.

9. Careful review and appropriate action to curb the disproportionate placement of Black students in special education classes or non-college preparatory classes.

10. Development of challenging and appropriate vocational and technical programs related to current and future job demands. Conversely, dead-end and inadequate vocational programs should be eliminated.

11. Development of strategies to maximize and sustain Black students in academic and gifted programs. Black students are seriously under represented in advanced academic, gifted and technical programs.

12. Development of strategies and techniques to curb disproportionate level of Black suspensions, expulsions and dropouts.

13. Increase the number of assignments requiring writing, speaking, problem solving and critical thinking, as well as oral exercises.

14. Placement and grouping of students, as well as promotion and graduation policies, should be guided by the academic progress of students and their learning and instructional needs, rather than by age and the concept of social promotion.

15. To assess school board membership needs in terms of background, skills, and diversity (ethnic, racial, sexual, age, geographic, social and political). School board should reflect the population of the school district.

16. Title I must be funded at full authorization and expanded.

17. Predominantly Black schools should be considered as effective schools with all the necessary finance, budget, books and administrative support provided white schools.

18. Techniques of desegregating schools (pupil assignment, faculty and staff assignment, pupil transportation, site selection, construction polities, etc.) (redrawing zone lines, pairing and grouping schools, modified feeder patterns, skip zoning, optional zones, open enrollment, transfers, magnet schools, special programs, metropolitan cooperation, open housing, etc.) should not put the burden of proof on Black schools. (Costs, neighborhood school mystique, busing, etc.)

19. That public schools should develop techniques to build up positive self-concepts in Black children, as well as eliminate the concept of a deficient deficit model.

20. Teachers' starting salaries should be equivalent to starting salaries for college graduates in the corporate world.

21. That all teachers in the elementary schools and junior high schools be subject matter specialists beginning with the third grade level. Subject matter specialists should be in the fields of reading, social studies, science, mathematics, literature, writing, and the areas of critical thinking and oral discourse (i.e., communication). Elementary teachers can not be specialists in all subjects (Reading, Writing, Language Arts, Arithmetic, Science, Social Sciences, etc.); so subject matter specialists should be hired.

22. Student incentives to remain in school should include: work/study programs; academic credit for experiential learning; financial assistance, cooperative education; internships and apprenticeships.

23. Development of a career ladder program (i.e. Apprentice, Tenured, Master) for all teachers as a means of incentive and enhancing morale.

24. Provision for full-time librarians and counselors in elementary and secondary schools.

25. Closer articulation between vocational education and the world of work. Instruction should be geared to practical realities and demands of industry.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, it must be noted that President Reagan's espousal of supply-side economics and the "New Federalism" has exacerbated the tenuous and marginal socio-economic status of black Americans and the poor. The drastic cutbacks in federal support for education, nutritional programs, housing, day care, health care and other vital social programs have placed an additional onus or strain on the nation's urban schools and society at large. Unemployment among Black youths in urban centers is approximately 53 percent and the rate of unemployment for Black adults is 14 percent. The total level of unemployment for all Americans for July, 1982, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was 10.5 million. The figure is now approximately 8 million.

Nonethless, keeping faith with their forebears, Black Americans must set their hands to the plow and work assiduously and unremittingly, as in the past, for top-quality education. It remains the passport to survival, upward mobility, and success in the United States.

Today, a mood of retreat, obfuscation and hostility to human and civil rights, *Brown* included, engulfs our nation. A national presidential administration, led by President Ronald Wilson Reagan, exhorts the nation to support tuition vouchers, tax credits for private schools, a frontal assault on the principle of affirmative action and an end to busing as one of many tools to achieve school desegregation. In point of fact, the Reagan Administration has urged over 50 communities across the nation to forswear affirmative action programs, and to be assured of the support of the Federal government in obstructing the implementation of active affirmative action programs.

The situation is equally bleak for over 9 million Black children and youths in the nation's public schools. The Federal government, in the celebrated Norfolk, Virginia school case which seeks to resegregate Black students, has joined the case on the side of the Norfolk School Board as amicus curiae. The Norfolk City Public School System, as was true of the well-known Prince Edward County, Virginia Public Schools, closed its doors in 1959 rather than desegregate in compliance with the *Brown* decisions. We now have the painful irony of the national government seeking to help a recalcitrant Norfolk City School Board in its efforts to resegregate Black children. Additionally, the Reagan Administration pledges support to other school districts (viz., Little Rock, Prince George's, Maryland, etc.) which seek to resegregate Black children.

Black parents must remain constant, steadfast and vigilant in supporting hard-earned educational rights and opportunities provided by the *Brown* decisions and subsequent Federal court decisions. An operational pragmatism constitutes a centrality for Black Americans supporting equality of educational opportunity. Operational pragmatism posits the belief that where the children of the white culture are enrolled, the educational resources, human and monetary, necessary for demonstrable educational excellence will be provided.

Equal educational opportunity represents the basis for the empowerment of Black Americans and socio-economic mobility in the American social order. Black Americans and fair-minded citizens must not permit a deferral of this long overdue process.

In summary, racial bifurcation or duality continues in American education at all levels (i.e., elementary-secondary and higher education). The overwhelming number of the 9 million Black children in elementary and secondary schools and 1 million in institutions of higher education are the recipients of separate and unequal education notwithstanding the momentous *Brown* decisions of 1954 and 1955 and subsequent Federal court decisions. In short, equity and excellence in education are far distant and elusive realities for Black and poor students in our nation. Our nation, to date, has failed to mobilize the commitment and resources, human and monetary, to ensure equality of educational opportunity and excellence for all children and youths. Now is the time to begin in earnest.

Mr. Chairman, even as we sit and interact in this salubrious and majestic setting on historic and awe-inspiring Capitol Hill, we are on the verge of losing another generation of Black and impoverished youngsters in urban school districts, predominantly Black, Hispanic and poor, throughout our nation. These youngsters, essentially, are the hapless victims of inadequate human and monetary resources and monumental national indifference. It is in the national interest that the Federal government seize the initiative in urban areas, as was done so nobly and creatively for war-devastated Europe in "turning the lights on again" through the massive and sustained Marshall Plan which cost in excess of 15 billion dollars between 1945–1948.

The time, Mr. Chairman, I believe, is long overdue to turn the educational, political and economic lights on in the sprawling urban centers of our nation. Horace Mann, a seminal and indefatigable advocate of public education, saw public education as the "equalizer of the conditions of men (women)." We should now, through a sustained, assiduous and genuine national effort, redeem Mann's earnest belief for all of our citizens.

John Gardner offers a highly potent and urgent admonition in his thoughtful book, "Excellence," for all of us. "A nation is never finished, You can't build it and then leave it standing as the Pharaohs did the pyramids. It has to be recreated for each generation by believing, caring men and women. It is now our turn. If we don't care, nothing can save the nation. If we believe and care, nothing can stop us."

Mr. Chairmen, I repeat a constant of my testimony: We have to truly care and act in support of equity and equality of opportunity for all Americans. A child's social class, race, ethnicity, where he or she lives, or point of national origin must not be the primary determinant as to whether he or she receives the highest quality of education our nation can afford. It is, decidedly, in our national interest to move forward affirmatively, fairly, and speedily.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Dr. Banks.

Dr. Brown.

Mr. BANKS. Dr. Brown would like to indicate a brief comment in relation to the report itself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. We would be very glad to have a comment from you, Dr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you.

Our purpose was to conduct our own research study and come up with our own findings. Needless to say, there have been a variety of reactions to the problems in carrying out research on blacks. Blacks are part of these major studies. If so, what recommendations have been suggested for black children and black elementary and secondary schools?

The absence of any recommendations in reference to blacks indicates that there is a need for blacks to conduct their own research study. We addressed the main issues as we saw them, but we have not attempted to treat the minor issues in any detail. Supplementary reports will follow this major report.

Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

The next witness is Dr. Thomas G. Sticht.

Am I pronouncing that correctly?

Mr. STICHT. You are doing well. I call it Sticht, just like a stitch in time.

Chairman HAWKINS. Dr. Sticht, we are pleased to hear from you.

Mr. STICHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for inviting me to testify today.

I would like to say I have spent something like 20 years studying adult literacy from all kinds of perspectives. I have done job and task analyses of cooks' jobs, automobile mechanics' jobs, to find out what are the cognitive skills required to do work. Currently I am preparing an integrated basic skills and basic electricity and electronics course under sponsorship of the Ford Foundation to permit people who read at a fourth to fifth grade level to enter into job technical training.

I believe that technological literacy is going to be one of the major problems that adults are going to face. I am currently conducting this research to transfer from the military environment a lot of the methods that were developed over the last 30 years which just have never been communicated. So, that report will be coming out near the end of the year. It will be called Cast-Off Youth, Training Methods From the Military Experience.

We have been able to demonstrate that it is possible to develop literacy within the context of the development of job relevant skills. This reveals one of the major problems in the whole area of literacy. And I would like to come directly to the point. I believe one of the things that the Federal Government can do starting here is to educate people about the nature of literacy, its development, and about its role in our economic and national defense.

I will say that for some 15 years I have conducted research within the military context to understand the nature of literacy in the area of defense. I am pleased that, having conducted this 20 years of literacy research in general and 15 in the Department of Defense, to be able to share some of this with you, although I don't think I could do that in 5 minutes; but I have a written commentary.

I would like to say this. I believe that adult literacy is one of the most misunderstood areas of inquiry that I know about. I have seen more mistakes made in the interest of trying to promote adult literacy than almost any other place. An example, recently a community college president was extolling the virtues of technology, in this case computers, in developing adult literacy. He made the comment that what it used to take 3 years to obtain in terms of improvement in students could now be done in 60 hours on the computer. They would make something like 2 to 3 years of gain.

Well, I submit to you that nobody who was not famous for their original learning rates will be able to accomplish in 60 hours with a computer what it takes the normal average child in and out of school to learn in 3 years. This problem is endemic within adult literacy, that is, that we can wave our hand and in 60 hours of education and training make up in 6 weeks during the summer what we failed to achieve in the last 18 years in school. This is one of the myths of adult literacy, that the people who enter these programs have such highly developed levels of conceptual ability that their problem is they just never encountered this stuff in print and with a little bit of phonics this coming summer, why, we'll have them right up there and out in the field working and being highly productive people in addition to being good parents, citizens, and community advocates.

That is a myth. That does not happen. It has never happened. Yet, this whole issue of the quick fix—the cycle of concern with adult illiteracy has been with us for decades. It is thoughtfully chronicled by Dr. Wanda Cook in a book distributed by the International Reading Association.

We have periodically concerned ourselves with issues of adult illiteracy. We discover it. We throw some money at it, and then we disappear; and the problem is there again. There is a fundamental reason for that. I might say that one of the things that I do is, I serve with UNESCO on its international jury that selects the annual prize winners. So, I have studied international development to some extent. I know that what cannot happen is that you cannot solve major problems of this type with campaigns. Quick fixes won't work.

The fundamental reason is this. Illiteracy cannot be stamped out. The problem is that literacy must be stamped in in each new generation. It is the natural condition of human beings to be born illiterate. They must then be made literate within a society. That is one of the fundamental issues that we must come to grips with if we are going to develop approaches to adult literacy. That is, we must recognize the role of the institutions for developing literacy in our attempts to—quote—stamp out illiteracy.

In that regard, one of the important things that has been discovered is that, the higher the education of the parent, the more likely it is that the child will achieve higher levels of education. So, there is an intergenerational transfer effect of education. This happens then before the child enters the school. It is predictable who will not succeed in school, to a very large extent, based upon background data, particularly how well the child performs in terms of oral language comprehension.

I chronicled that in a volume that has numerous research studies showing the effects of the oral language upon the subsequent achievement of the written language. It is one of the most profound effects there is, the most firmly established. By the way, it formed the basis for the development of intelligence tests over 100 years ago, since intelligence tests turned out to be merely oral language examinations of what people know. They then later on become able to demonstrate what they know through the written language, and that's what they learned in school; but they couldn't demonstrate any more knowledge in the written language than they had in the oral language in the early grades. Consequently, it was possible to predict who would be high achieving in school just by measuring their oral language achievement before they went to school, because what they do essentially is close that gap in initial literacy achievement.

Additionally, though, literacy goes beyond the learning to recognize in print what you could previously recognize in speech. That's the problem that phonics deals with. Phonics teaches you to do that. That's what the part p-h-o-n means, pertaining to sound. Reading permits you to generate sound, and you can then comprehend, if, in fact, you could comprehend that spoken language in the first place.

The problem with literacy is that it goes well beyond that. You have to learn nowadays, if you are going to become an electronics technician, how to read some very, very difficult schematics. Those are not represented in the spoken language; they are represented in a graphics display which has its own properties and cognitive demands.

Let me point out that one of the consequences of the fact that oral language is needed in order to succeed in school is that, if the child comes from a home where the parents are poorly educated, they will not be able to develop the oral language skills of that child very highly. The child will lack vocabulary. It will lack the cognitive skills of directing attention upon demand of teachers, if the parents at home don't address the child as teachers would.

This is why I believe it is very important that we focus more attention on the education of parents, because the parent can both transfer the competence of language and knowledge to the child through the spoken medium and through reading to the child. In addition, of course, an educated parent will transfer attitudes positive to education. So, you get two things.

Second, a problem with literacy and why we won't be able to stamp out illiteracy, in addition to the fact that illiteracy is the natural condition of human beings and literacy must be addressed, the second problem is that the nature and extent of what it requires by way of being literate is not fixed in society. It constantly changes. Since the requirements for literacy constantly change, that means we have to have in place an institution and arrangements for inculcating new levels of literacy whenever the economic and international conditions demand, as they do today.

This latter problem is one which then means that we have a moving target, if I can bring in some of the military background. That means we have to be prepared to cope with higher and higher demands. That is what is going on today in the military. Due to the infusion of so much technology and equipment, it is finding it more and more difficult to get people who have technological literacy to learn how to operate, maintain, and repair those equipments. In that regard, this problem means that they have to raise the entry requirements on mental aptitude tests. That has the unfortunate consequence of excluding many females and minority members from military service. That means then, of course, they are not eligible for education benefits such as the GI bill. Yet, it is such things as the GI bill where one can demonstrate most profoundly the intergenerational transmission of education.

So, it seems to me as though one of the things the Congress needs to do is to address this issue of the moving target of literacy. That can probably be best accomplished by bringing together and consolidating or at least coordinating better the programs and vocational education, adult education, and the Job Training and Partnership Act programs. Those programs can—it should be recognized, I should say, that literacy requires that you know something about what you are trying to read. So, anytime one develops a body of knowledge, one can be improving literacy.

But if one would recognize that one can also develop literacy in the context of job training, then one could infuse more literacy use into those job training programs and accomplish both the development of technological skills and of literacy.

With that, I will end my statement. I will be, of course, pleased to answer any questions.

[Prepared statement of Thomas Sticht follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS G. STICHT, PRESIDENT, APPLIED BEHAVORIAL AND COGNITIVE SCIENCES, INC., ADJUNCT RESEARCH PROFESSOR, U.S. NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

Mr. Chairman, members of Congress, Thank you for inviting me to speak to you regarding problems facing our country as a consequence of our failure to provide adequate literacy and learning skills to millions of our fellow citizens.

For some twenty years I have engaged in teaching adults in various settings: adult remedial literacy programs, in community colleges, at major institutions of higher education and in professional workshops and seminars both here and abroad. Additionally, for over fifteen years, I have been engaged in research and development projects to understand literacy and learning problems faced by the military services of our country.

In my testimony today, I will first comment on adult literacy problems in general, and then I will make comments specifically regarding adult literacy problems affecting the military.

Part I

The "Illiteracy" Problem[a]

Periodically, the problem of adult "illiteracy" is discovered in the United States. This cyclical phenomenon has been thoughtfully documented by Dr. Wanda Cook in a book published and distributed by the International Reading Association. She notes that from time to time, usually in association with some major social disturbance, such as World Wars I and II, the civil rights movement during the 1960's, and periods of economic unrest, it is noted that millions of adults cannot read and write, or that they do so only with minimal skills. During these cycles of awareness of adult literacy problems, there are frequently calls for "campaigns" to "stamp out illiteracy" once and for all. Most recently, Mr. Jonathan Kozol, in his book titled "Illiterate America" (Doubleday, 1985) asserts that some 60 million U.S. adults should be called "...illiterate in terms of U.S. print communications at the present time.", and he then goes on to call, once again, for "...an all out literacy war in the United States." at a cost of some $10 billion.

Unfortunately, it seems to me, no matter how well intentioned, such calls for a "war" or "campaign" against illiteracy are misleading and distract from very serious problems of adult education. These problems result in large part from the fact that, on the one hand, literacy must be developed anew in each new generation and this process too often goes poorly in the case of the children of undereducated adults and, on the other hand, the problem of "intergenerational illiteracy" is exacerbated by the fact that the "levels" of literacy needed to function well in our society are not fixed in either their nature or extent and so todays "literate" may be tomorrow's "illiterate". Neither of these conditions of contemporary U.S. education are addressed by "quick-fix" "campaigns" to "stamp-out illiteracy". Rather, they demand institutional changes in both our attitudes toward adult education and in our commitment to provide opportunities for lifelong adult education and training.

"Intergenerational Illiteracy"

The recurrent nature of adult literacy problems is demonstrated by the fact that, each year many students enter our public schools who come from homes in which they have been unable to acquire the minimal competencies needed to succeed in school; many of these students later become dropouts and failures of the school system; they then become the unemployed, lower socioeconomic status, marginally literate parents of a new generation of students who, in their turn, will enter the schools without the minimum competencies needed to succeed, and the cycle of marginal literacy and marginal living repeats itself again and again.

Current attempts to break the cycles of marginal literacy and marginal living focus resources on compensatory education programs operated in the public schools, where it is hoped that the disadvantages of the home can be overcome by dint of extra effort at school. Recently, this extra effort amounted to some $3.48 billion in Title I funding (fiscal year 84).

When it is discovered from time to time, as it has been today, that, despite the billions of dollars of compensatory education, millions of young people have dropped out of or grduated from high school with reading skills below the 5th grade level, or the currently perceived level of literacy thought necessary for adequately functioning in our society, additional efforts may be made to provide education to out-of-school youth and adults. However, these efforts take on quite a different character from the compensatory programs in the public schools. Most noticeable is the difference in the amount of federal funding for adult basic education, which this year amounted to around $100 million, less than 3% of the Title I funds. Furthermore, rather than providing for thousands of professionally trained adult educators,as is done in the case of special education teachers for children, it is expected that adult basic education programs can be mostly staffed with volunteers, as in the current National Adult Literacy Initiative, and that they will be of limited duration, fast-acting, far-reaching, and bring about not only sizeable increases in academic literacy skills, but also improvement in gaining employment, parenting, community participation, and a host of other things.

The Changing Nature of "Literacy"

Compounding the problems of "intergenerational illiteracy" is the fact that the standards for being recognized as "literate" in contemporary society have risen dramtically in the last fifty years (see Figure 1). Problems facing the schools as they attempt to ensure the achievement of rising standards of literacy by each child, are magnified by the need to provide education to an ever increasing diversity of learning aptitude, cultural and language backgrounds. In 1980, for instance, the public schools enrolled 3.3 million handicapped students, 11 million members of various racial or ethnic groups, and some 1 million students of limited English proficiency (U.S. Department of Education, 1982).

The diversity of student backgrounds, coupled with the need to have each child reach ever higher levels of literacy strains the capacity of the traditional school system, and the traditional job of the teacher. In earlier times, schools handled the problems of diversity by screening out a significant part of the population, for example, blacks, rural farm children, and the learning disabled were permitted to avoid school or to drop out in the elementary grades, and by permitting a wide range of achievement, resulting in many high school graduates with less than 9th grade literacy abilities. While generally acceptable as a level of achievement a generation or so ago, youth and adults with 6th to 9th grade literacy skills are today considered as "functionally illiterate" or as "illiterate". For instance, in developing the foundations for his call for a "literacy war" in the United States, Mr. Kozol argues that some 35 million adults reading in the 6th to 8th grade range should be considered "...illiterate in terms of U.S. print communications at the present time."

But here, it seems to me, we run the risk of trivializing the problems of undereducated adults by referring to them as "illiterates". Clearly, people who can read with the knowledge and skills demanded by the 5th through 8th grades are not illiterate. In fact, in February of this year I taught a reading skills program for young adults, some of whom read in the 6th to 9th grade range, and found that they could perform a great number of reading tasks, though they frequently had problems with spelling and analytical thought. But they were not "illiterate". They, like millions of other youth and adults, can benefit from a lot more serious, rigorous education and training in many areas of knowledge. And they can use their "middle-range" literacy skills to gain new knowledge by reading, writing, analyzing, computing, graphing, reporting, and interacting with knowledgeable teachers and peers. What they cannot benefit much from is the "phonics", "decoding", "word attack", and light reading that is offered in the 50 or so hours of tutoring that most "illiterates" get in voluntary literacy "campaigns".

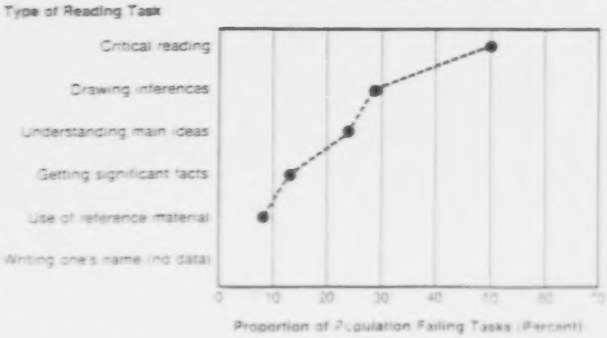
Finding Solutions to Adult Literacy Problems

If we are to find solutions to problems of adult "illiteracy" in the United States, we need to first come to an appreciation of the ramifications of the two factors affecting education discussed above. These are (1) each new generation of "illiterate" infants must be educated to high levels of literacy, and particular problems are posed by the children of undereducated adults; and (2) the nature and extent of literacy needed to function well are not fixed.

Regarding the first factor, we must recognize that both the education of parents and their children is needed if children are to enter the school system with the competencies and attitudes needed to succeed. From this point of view, adult literacy programs should be regarded as compensatory education for the adults's children. Elsewhere I have reviewed a growing body of evidence to suggest that the benefits of adult education most usually transfer to the education of their offspring (paper for the National Academy of Education, Human Resources Research Organization, Professional Paper 2.83, February 1983; see also World Bank Reprint Series Number 247, paper by Nancy Birdsall and Susan Hill Cochrane, 1982 for international evidence of the effects of parental education on the subsequent educational achievement of their children). Perhaps the most

Figure 1

This figure presents data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (1972). It shows that if our criterion of literacy were that people be able to read reference material, then some 8 percent of the young adults (25 year olds) in the nation would be "illiterate". However, if critical reading is our goal, then some 50 percent of young adults would be called "illiterate". These data show that student achievement in reading, as a problem area, changes considerably depending on our criterion of literacy.



dramatic demonstration of the effects of parent education on the subsequent educational achievement of their children in the U.S. occured after World War II when veterans who used the GI Bill to further their own education,were found to have children who went further in school.

Thus, investment in programs for adult literacy development may produce "double duty dollars", because by improving the education of the adults, we may improve the educability of their children.

Regarding the second factor, by increasing our committment to adult education, we should, over time, be better able to cope with the problems posed by changing literacy requirements. If adult education improves the educability of children, then the schools should be able to do a better job of bringing more jobs to higher levels of achievement without the need for extensive, compensatory education programs for preschool and elementary school children. Additionally, we provide a means to permit adults of all educational levels to achieve their education goals, whether these be personal or vocational. And of special importance to national economic and security interests, arrangements will be in place for retraining and upgrading the skills of those displaced by technology or international economic changes.

With concern for adult literacy development currently at a high level among community groups, business, and government policy makers, the challenge now is to avoid the "quick-fix", "war on illiteracy", "campaign" mentality that has plagued the field of adult basic education for decades. This does not mean that good works underway should stop. Rather, it means that, as current efforts progress, planning should be underway to put in place what is currently missing in the United States, that is, a comprehensive policy and system for human resources development that recognizes the need for both childhood and adulthood opportunities for sound education.

While it is difficult for me to conceive of what all might be entailed by a committment to a total human resources development policy, this will have to be determined by a national commission or other appropriate forum after considerable thought, we can anticipate that, if this policy links children's and adults' literacy development then there should be some overall cost savings in compensatory education programs. Further, if programs conducted by the Departments of Defense, Labor, Agriculture, and Education could be, if not consolidated, then at least coordinated, additional adult education benefits might be secured without too much additional cost.

For instance, if the Department of Defense agreed to accept up to 20% of its enlisted force from those young adults now excluded because of education deficiencies, and to educate and train them as they have repeatedly done in the past (see Part II of this testimony), then those young people would receive education while in the military and they would also qualify for the new GI Bill, and, presumably, their children would benefit through the "intergenerational transfer" of education. The latter could be monitored by the Department of Education.

Additional benefits could be achieved by recognizing that "literacy" is not something different from education or training. Rather, literacy is developed by engaging students in the use of written texts and in writing. More attention to such activities in the context of job training in the Job Corps or programs conducted by the Job Training and Partnership Act could pay dividends in developing both job skills and literacy skills.

In short, better use of compensatory education funds, educational opportunities provided by military, labor, community colleges, "correctional" facilities, industry and other existing adult education and training providers, coupled with better prepared educators from rejuvenated professional schools of education, and some funds for needed research, could go a long way to providing a more cost-effective education system for "stamping-in" literacy in each new generation, and for meeting the requirements of lifelong learning in the wake of inevitable cultural change.

Part II

Literacy Issues Affecting the Military[b]

A major concern for military management is that the numbers of young adults from which the military services have traditionally obtained their new personnel is shrinking and is expected to show a drop from more than 30 million individuals in the 18 to 24 year-old group in 1981 to only some 24 million by 1995, a decline of 22 percent in less than a decade and a half.

The implications for the military are that they will have to compete with higher education, business and industry, and other government agencies to fill personnel needs from this group of young adults. Recruitment costs are presently in excess of a billion dollars in personnel, advertising, and benefit costs, and can be expected to rise higher and higher if the armed services are to attract the young adults with the literacy and other mental skills, and the education levels, that are associated with successful performance in the military.

In addition to witnessing a decline in the traditional recruitment group, the armed services face a second serious problem, and that is that the equipments and weapons systems used by the armed services are growing in numbers and in technological complexity. There is concern that the mental quality needed to maintain the defense readiness of the military services may be higher than can readily be recruited from the decreasing group of young adults, at least if current standards of education and mental quality are maintained.

Literacy Levels of the Young Adult Population. The problems of recruiting high mental quality and literacy skills from the young adult population are highlighted from a 1980 study by the Department of Defense. This study examined the reading skills of a nationally representative sample of 18 through 23 year-olds and found that 4.8%, or some 1,222,196 read below the 5th grade level. Some 41.4%, over 10.5 million, read below the level of a student entering the ninth grade. Overall, the average young adult was reading like a student in the fourth month of the ninth grade (grade 9.4). For black adults, the average reading level was grade 7.0, and for Hispanics the average level was 7.7. In this same age group, the average white male who constitutes the bulk of the military's strength, read at the 10th grade level.

In recruiting from this group of young adults, the military services have, in recent years, been successful in obtaining overall distributions of literacy that are higher than those of the total group. For instance, in fiscal years 1981, 1982, and 1983, the services accessioned almost no one reading below the 5th grade level, although some 5% of the young adult population reads below this level. Additionally, the percentages of new recruits reading below the 9th grade level declined from 38.9% in FY 81 to 32.5% in FY 82 and 27.6% in FY 83.

Impact on Minorities. While the military services have been successful in increasing the mental quality and literacy skills of new personnel through the use of higher selection standards, this has come at the expense of opportunities for minorities and females. For minorities, the fact that the services have been able to raise their entry standards for literacy means that, because blacks and Hispanics score considerably lower on mental aptitude tests, they are excluded in greater relative numbers whenever mental standards are raised. For females, traditional military and congressional policies limit access to military service and, females do not score as high as males on the various subtests of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).

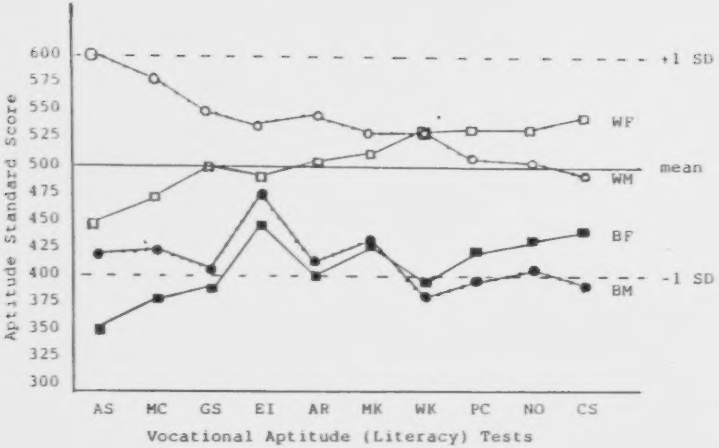
Figure 2 shows how the young adult population of 1980 scored on the various subtests of the ASVAB (recall, this is based on a nationally representative sample of 18 through 23 year-olds). The figure shows data only for blacks and whites; Hispanics fall between these two groups. There are two major trends to be noted in this figure. First, blacks score almost uniformly 100 standard score points below whites, and second, females fall below males in various subtests that measure *technological literacy*. The latter include the specialized literacy areas of automotive and shop knowledge (AS); mechanical comprehension (MC); and similar areas of knowledge in which our culture generally encourages male involvement.

A consequence of the fact that females fall well below males in the technological literacy areas is that they do not have as great a chance at qualifying for military service because the services use scores in the special literacy areas as supplemental screening devices, and, furthermore, if females do qualify for service, they are not likely to be assigned to jobs in which they could receive technical skills training in the more rewarding occupations. As indicated in Figure 1, this problem is compounded for black females by their overall low scores, as well as the trend for their scores in the technological literacy areas to decline even further. Hispanics and others who must learn English as a second language also suffer additional burdens in gaining access to and benefiting from military training, as recently documented by Dr. Frederick Chang in Navy research.

Literacy Requirements of Military Service

Major requirements for military service are encountered at the time of selection and classification testing on the ASVAB, as indicated above, and again upon entry into the military where one first encounters the literacy and learning demands of military training programs. Following training, the literacy and learning demands of the actual job are encountered, and, finally, literacy requirements for career progression through the paygrades and to qualify for reenlistment,if so desired, pose obstacles to be overcome.

Many studies of the technical manuals and learning materials that new military personnel are expected to read and learn from have been conducted. These studies have shown that the military's demands for literacy skills, reading and writing, are equal to or in excess of those demands in civilian businesses and industries. The armed services have weapons systems that are accompanied by millions of pages of documentation. Writing in the Armed Forces in Society Journal this year, Dr. Thomas Duffy of Carnegie Mellon University,



Tests:
AS = Auto & Shop Information
MC = Mechanical Comprehension
GS = General Science
EI = Electronics Information
AR = Arithmetic Reasoning
MK = Mathematics knowledge
WK = Word Knowledge
PC = Paragraph Comprehension
NO = Numerical Operations
CS = Coding Speed

Legend:
WF = White Female □
WM = White Male ○
BF = Black Female ■
BM = Black Male ●

Figure 2

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notes that the Navy's nuclear aircraft carrier the U.S.S. Carl Vinson requires documentation which, if stacked in one pile, would be higher than the Washington monument. Analyses of the reading difficulty of military technical materials reveals reading difficulty levels for the most part in the range that would be found in the materials used in the 10th through the 12th grades in school.

But more importantly, the military services expect new recruits to spend the first months of service in technical training programs that demand not only 9th or 10th grade reading skills, but also the ability to rapidly learn from lectures, textbooks, laboratory exercises, sometimes involving complex and dangerous equipment, and to do this under the stress of the military environment with its requirements for team activity and individual discipline. It is doubly difficult for those who are unable to adjust to the institutional demands of the public schools, and who dropout and join the military, to meet the literacy, learning, and discipline demands of military life. High school dropouts have up to twice the chance of failing in the military as do high school graduates, and this trend holds true across all levels of mental quality. Whatever it is that helps people make it through the K-12 school system seems to help them make it in the armed services.

In addition to the literacy demands of training and job performance, the military poses requirements such as passing promotion examinations that require personnel to study correspondence course materials and to participate in various training programs such as controlling damage to ships in the Navy, or surviving under nuclear, biological, or chemical warfare across the services. Additionally, to qualify for reenlistment, service personnel must once again meet mental quality and literacy standards on the ASVAB and other literacy tests. Recently, for instance, the Army has raised the ASVAB score needed for reenlistment from 90 to 110. This has the consequence of raising literacy skill requirements from the 9th to the 10.2 grade level.

Literacy Training in the Armed Services

Given the increases in mental and literacy standards in the last five years, and the subsequent accession of more highly skilled personnel, one might expect that the military's needs to conduct on-duty remedial literacy (including mathematics) programs might have decreased. But that is not the case. Army data indicate that the number of 40 hour enrollments in Basic Skills Education Programs, the Army's on-duty remedial literacy program, increased from 199,923, and a cost of $14,924,000 in fiscal year 1982, to 307,846 and a cost of $18,517,000 in fiscal year 1985. In the Navy, participation in the on-duty Functional Skills Program increased from around 17,000 and a cost of some $1.5 millions in fiscal year 1980, to over 25,000 and a cost of over $2.5 millions in fiscal year 1984. In both the Army and Navy, where the bulk of the military's remedial literacy training takes place, projections are for higher costs and enrollments in fiscal years 1986 and beyond to 1990.

The increases in remedial literacy training stem from increases in the standards for literacy set in the armed services, as in the case of the Army's raising of the reenlistment standard from the 9th to the 10th grades (as derived from the ASVAB-type Army aptitude tests). In the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations has established a goal of 9th grade reading level for all Navy personnel. In actuality, however, the Navy permits personnel with reading levels as high as 12.9 to voluntarily enroll in remedial reading programs with the approval of the Commander. Given this circumstance, the vast majority of Functional Skills students in the Navy enter the program reading at the 10th grade level or above. Unfortunately, while the Navy has many personnel reading below the 9th grade level, they are not *required* to attend remedial literacy training, and there is no mechanism for determining who has or has not attended such training in the Navy. This may lead to the situation in which those most in need of literacy training do not get it.

A difficult problem for the military services is to obtain quality educational services for remedial literacy programs. Today, in the Navy, literacy training in the Functional Skills program is conducted by some dozen or so civilian educational contractors throughout the world, and there is no common curriculum, standards of performance, requirements for instructor qualifications and so forth. As a consequence, there is no uniformity of educational quality or accomplishment. The Army, too, has a multitude of educational service providers and has no means of controlling the contents, methods, and quality of instruction. Altogether, in fiscal year 1981, the last date for which information is available, the military conducted some 19 different types of remedial literacy programs, and, using a variety of reading tests, reported programs making as much as 2.3 years of reading improvement in as little as 14 hours of training, and as little as 0.9 years gain in as much as 120 hours of instruction.

Though both the Army and the Navy currently have research and development projects underway to address the problems of obtaining quality literacy instruction that makes demonstrative gains in the ability to perform military literacy and numeracy tasks, the services have a long way to go to develop a well managed system for delivering high quality, useful remedial literacy training to those most in need.

Performance of Marginally Literate Personnel in the Military

Despite all the concerns of military managers for obtaining higher mental quality personnel, the record of the military in successfully training and utilizing very large numbers of lower aptitude, low literate personnel when necessary is excellent. For example, as Figure 3 illustrates, since 1950 and the Korean war, there have been three times when large numbers of lower aptitude personnel entered the military in large numbers: during the Korean war, later on during the Viet Nam conflict, and still later, after the implementation of the All Voluntary Force, when the ASVAB was "misnormed" such that the services thought they were getting higher aptitude personnel than was actually the case.

In recent research that associates and I are conducting under sponsorship of the Ford Foundation, we found that, despite considerable criticism by the military, the lower aptitude personnel who entered the services during the Viet Nam war under Project 100,000 performed almost as well as did average aptitude personnel, as indicated by the ratings of satisfactory or better performance given by military commanders. Figure 4 compares the performance of less literate, lower aptitude personnel to that of average aptitude personnel during World War II, Project 100,000, in which the military brought in up to 100,000 personnel a year who would have been excluded from military service under earlier mental standards, and during the ASVAB misnorming, when it was unknown that such large numbers of recruits were, in fact, not average in aptitude but, rather, in the lowest mental category permitted to enlist by Congress.

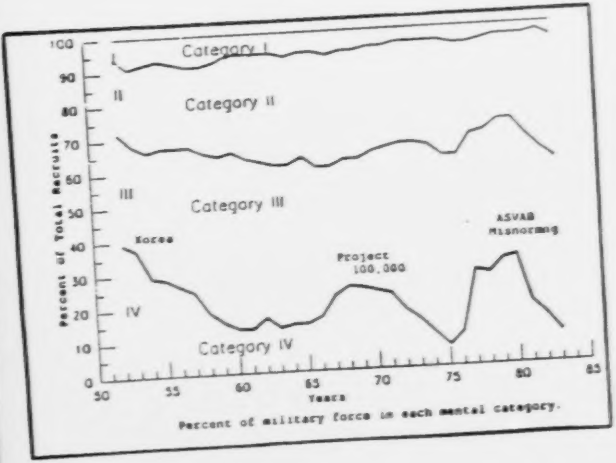
As indicated in Figure 4 lower aptitude, marginally literate personnel did not perform as well as did average aptitude personnel. But, and this is a matter of some judgement, they appear to have performed almost as well as average ability recruits on such indicators as completion of the term of duty and achievement of the paygrade of E4, which corresponds in the Army to corporal's rank, roughly.

Additional data indicate that some 8,200 of the lower aptitude personnel who entered the military under Project 100,000 were still in the service in fiscal year 1983, and for many of them, their years of education increased, their aptitudes increased, and they had achieved supervisory positions. Also, for a sample of Project 100,000 veterans, data suggest that 68% had used the GI Bill to obtain additional training and education.

These findings regarding the performance of lower aptitude, less literate men should not be taken to indicate that such personnel are not more difficult to train and utilize, because they are. But, when faced with utilizing such so-called "marginal" personnel, the military's job classification, training, and performance system can meet the challenge, and the undereducated can provide useful service and benefit from the military's assistance.

Issues Regarding Adult Illiteracy and the Military

In this very brief statement of some of the issues facing the military relating to problems of adult illiteracy there are three main points:



Percent of military force in each mental category.

Figure 3. Three time periods in which high percentages of low mental quality, low literate Category IV personnel have been recruited into the armed services.

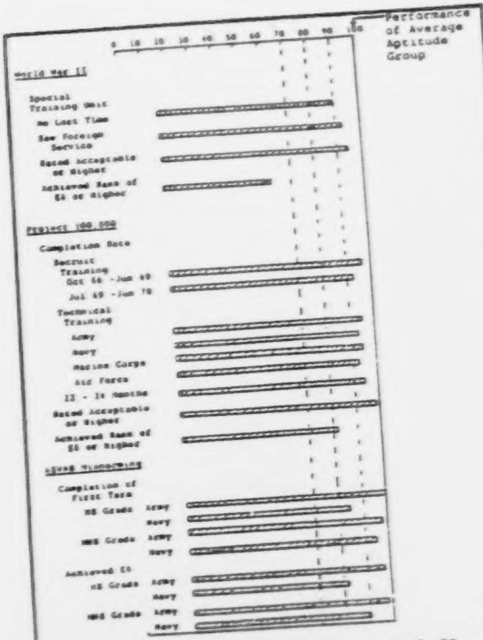


Figure 4. Comparison of lower aptitude personnel who entered the military in World War II, Project 100,000, and the ASVAB misnorming to the performance of average aptitude personnel who served during the same periods. Performance of average aptitude personnel is expressed as 100% and lower aptitude performance is expressed as a percentage of that of the average aptitude groups.

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(1) How will the military deal with the decline in the numbers of young people in the age 18 through 23 range without lowering mental, literacy, and education standards?

(2) How can the Nation increase the general and technological literacy skills needed to preserve the security of our own and other free countries, and particularly as this need applies to minorities and females?

(3) Can the demonstrated ability of the military in training and utililizing less literate, undereducated young adults be put to better use in coping with the problems of adult illiteracy in this and the coming decade?

Footnotes:

[a] The comments of Part I are an extension of comments which appeared in an opinion editorial in the Wall Street Journal of 3 September 1985.

[b] The comments of Part II are my own opinions and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the Department of Defense or its member services.

Chairman **HAWKINS**. Thank you, Dr. Sticht.

We will begin to question the witness. Mr. Goodling first.

Mr. **GOODLING**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think there is a portion of Mr. Anderson's testimony that really caught my eye because it is so true. He says: The answer is that over a period of many years my experience has been that reading seldom gets weighted in proportion to its importance in Federal decisionmaking. One of the reasons for this fact is the way that government decisionmaking works, every little special interest group gets something. Unfortunately that is true. I guess a good example is, there is no question we improved the vocational education bill when it was reauthorized. We could have done a lot better, but consensus was so important; and that doesn't make for the best program.

What I am going to do, I am going to try to get at least all the leadership in education in my 19th District to read the book. I think it would be very meaningful. And then if they can get it on down to kindergarten and first and second grade teachers, I think it would be also beneficial.

Dr. Banks, I would ask you the question that I asked Dr. Gardner. How would you respond or how would you deal with the teacher's comment that, in trying to motivate, she has great difficulty simply because the role models of her students are the highly paid, the millionaire entertainers and the millionaire athletes? Which, I might say, really let us down when they were finished testifying about cocaine, only one of the group that I saw ever apologized or said to young people it was stupid. And then on top of that I read in this week's paper where the quarterback of the Chicago Bears said it's a fun game, it's a kid's game, and he likes to play it and then get drunk. So, now we've told young people that the way to get motivated, I guess, is use cocaine and get drunk.

How would you respond to that teacher's dilemma?

Mr. **BANKS**. Mr. Goodling, I would make the observation that the greatest motivation is success. As we look in our school districts—

and I speak in particular, Congressman Goodling, of urban school districts—that if we have in place an opportunity for jobs, and that's why I hope that there will be an expansion of the Humphrey-Hawkins Act in terms of resources toward disastrous unemployment levels for youths in large urban school districts. I think if we have in place a sense of hope, Congressman, for youngsters, that is to say, that they see the nexus or the connection between education and a job and success, that will take care of the motivation.

I would make a further comment here that education is costly. If we really want to motivate our youngsters—and I come back, Congressman, to—and I was a youngster in junior high school when this occurred—the Marshall plan of 1945. Here we had a war-devastated Europe. The prophets and prophetesses of gloom thought that Europe would not rise again, but it did rise. But we put in, as you well know, over $15 billion into war-torn Europe, devastated Europe.

I think another piece, as a final point here, I think we need to give very serious thought, and that is to say that we have a painful bifurcation in our Nation. We have those who are highly affluent, and we have large urban school districts that represent educational wastelands.

I hope that this committee will give very serious thought, because it will be in the national interest in terms of multiplier effect, of declaring large urban and rural school districts that are poor, too, educational disaster areas. Put in the money that we put in for Europe and other areas, to give a sense of hope to the youngster, for instance, in Baltimore, where I work. The unemployment level among black youths is so high we don't really know. We know it is over 50 percent. We know that. But if we factor in, Congressman Goodling, the so-called discouraged, it would approximate 60 percent, and you can replicate that across the Nation.

My point in summary is that the greatest motivation in terms of education, in terms of a community is success. Put the people to work. Help people to see the relationship between education, which is power, and success in terms of the larger community.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Sticht, I think you indicated that we have thrown money at the problem—or was that Mr. Anderson—and perhaps have not gotten a good return with some of the money we have thrown. I guess I am thinking of the money we spent on young people when they got beyond, let's say, about fifth or sixth grade in attempting to do something about their reading skills. What I observed was we were very effective in first, second, and third grade, and that the money we spent, the Federal dollars, on the senior high level was less effective. I think it goes back partially to what Dr. Banks said in relationship to at that age students have to see a reason. Not only that, it's painful, I guess, to admit that you need that remedial approach.

Where do you think we have failed, if you do, on our approach to doing something about the whole literacy problem or education in general.

Mr. STICHT. Let me say I was born and raised in Arizona. I know some of the problems of the rural Indian population. The problems there, of course, are extraordinary, many cultural adjustment problems that interfere with education.

I would say in response that, to a very large extent, a lot of the problems—this will not make my friends in many quarters, perhaps, but since I don't work for schools of education and institutions of higher education, I can stand back and look at them. Many of them are very bad. They don't develop professional educators like professional educators could be developed. There needs to be almost, in my judgment, a wholesale restructuring of schools of professional education. I don't think any of us would want to go to a physician who had no training in the basic medical sciences, who had no physiology, no anatomy, no chemistry, no biology. Yet, I know that, if you go to a school of education, it's possible, for instance, to graduate without taking a course in human learning. I don't understand how come people can come out of a professional school where your express purpose is to understand how human cognition develops and what to do to develop it, without ever having the foundations of cognitive science. In this day and age it makes no sense.

Today, when we can program computers to talk, sing, play music, write papers, why, we're able to make the computers more literate than a lot of the people. It doesn't make sense to not have professionally trained educators in schools of education who can come out without the basic cognitive sciences, in addition who have no training in instructional systems development, in human problem solving, in teaching, even in many cases. And I recently hired an instructional technologist in my company in San Diego only to discover again this person had had no training at all in a course in cognition. Yet, this person had a master's degree in instructional technology, which is all about how you go about designing instruction to affect cognition.

So, I would think that one major place is to improve schools of education. Within that category itself, I would focus and I would target those institutions that are traditionally black schools, and I would infuse lots of dollars into those schools to upgrade the capability of those schools of education to prepare professional educators because a vast problem exists among the minority groups. And not only in basic literacy, I'm not talking now about being able to comprehend in print what you can't in speech.

I am talking about reservoirs of knowledge. For instance, if one looks at the armed services vocational aptitude battery, that measures one's knowledge not only in word knowledge and paragraph comprehension, which we would call reading but which they call verbal, but additionally there are tests that assess what one knows about mechanics, that is, how do things work? How do mechanical objects work? Automotive and shop information, general science. And in all of those areas blacks score approximately 100 points below the average for whites. And Hispanics fall in between.

Furthermore, though, with respect to females, if you look at those traditional areas like automotive and shop, mechanical comprehension, black females fall additionally further below males in that area, where the males tend to do a little bit better. Even among the white categories, females score almost 50 to 60 points below average then when one goes into those areas like automotive and shop, mechanical, general science.

Those are the kinds of aptitude areas, by the way, that industry will use to select people for technical training, that vocational schools will select people for technical training, and it's the sorts of things, of course, that the armed forces will use to select people for technical training. So, if you're low in those areas, you're not going to get into technical programs.

So, it seems to me that, in addition to improving the schools of education, one should focus a great deal of attention on this area of technological literacy. This means improving the training and education of people whose reading skills are, say, between the fifth to the ninth grade level.

There has been some concern with focusing resources on people who are reading below the fifth grade level. Clearly, more resources should be focused there, because there is practically nothing focused there now. That will constitute some 4.8 percent, let's say roughly 5 percent of the new population coming out of school each year could be expected to be reading below that level, roughly, say, maybe 200,000 people a year.

But the bulk of the problem of marginal literacy and that problem where there are growing numbers comes in those people reading between the fifth and ninth grade level, those people show up many times in programs and present themselves for help. You don't have to go out and beat the bushes to bring them in or extensive recruitment. Yet, when they show up for help, so often institutions fail them. We need to look at those institutions carefully.

I would say this: one of the major sorts of institutions that we ought to carefully look at and consider enhancing a great deal are community colleges. Community colleges are attractive to youth and young adults. They aren't elementary or secondary schools; they are colleges. They have developed middle studies programs, but Prof. John Rouche at the University of Texas could testify better than I. I know that he would tell you that many of those programs are a shambles.

There is a real opportunity where we could mix basic skills and content area teaching. That is, people show up to college to learn college subject matter and then told to go sit in a laboratory someplace reading 500 separate little cards about 500 separate little topics. They have no chance to build a consolidated body of knowledge.

Furthermore, we could be teaching them literacy skills within the context of natural sciences, life sciences, but we don't do that because there's the myth of literacy that says literacy is something you first get and then have to apply. Of course, that is totally wrong. You get it while you apply it.

If I were looking at where funds could be focused and emphasis could be focused, because so many millions of people present themselves for help, I would focus on community colleges.

So, those are a couple of things in response to your question.

Mr. **Goodling**. Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Mr. Fawell.

Mr. **Fawell**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just have one question. I do want to express my gratitude for what I have heard here. It has been edifying for me. I have just recently read where the Secretary of Education has centered on bilingual education and the failure, as he sees it, to do the job which is basically to emphasize proficiency in English.

What opinions do any of the witnesses have in regard to whether this, our use of bilingual education, has hampered reading proficiency in English?

Mr. **Anderson**. I will venture an opinion if you clearly understand that this is not a special expertise of mine. I think the Secretary made a correct conclusion. If you just throw all of the studies in together indiscriminately and ask what's the average result, the average result is confusing. I think if you read the newspaper clipping, an assistant of the Secretary's—I think her name is Whitten—presented what is actually closer to the truth of the matter. That is, quality bilingual, bicultural programs which take as their primary role, or at least a major role, preparing children to understand and join mainstream culture and to become literate in English—see, some of these programs have a mixture of goals. So, that's what makes it confusing. Some of them are primarily intended to promote an appreciation for and pride in one's own cultural heritage, which is a worthy goal. Depending on how the program is set up and the quality of its execution, that possibly will get in the way of becoming literate in English.

But it would be my guess that quality programs—and we have quite a bit of knowledge now about what counts as quality schooling and quality instruction. In that framework, when you're talking about a quality program, bilingual, bicultural education does work, probably works better than immersion experience for children who come in with little or no English.

Now, there are questions of whether it is feasible in districts that have 26 different languages that they might be proposed that they teach, and so on, whether a well-designed program will work and whether it will work at least a little better than an immersion program, I think the answer is yes.

Mr. **Fawell**. Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. I was struck when Dr. Gardner this morning outlined the system in California as being that which provides that one-eighth of the top students would be admissible to the university system, the University of California, for example. Then the top one-third would be permitted to go to State universities. Then the rest of them would go to 2-year community colleges.

It just seems to me that that tends to emphasize a rather unfair competition, whether or not we can judge the individuals at that level. If we are really looking for educational reform, perhaps we are starting at the wrong end and should start much earlier. And I think Dr. Sticht indicated that all children are illiterate to begin with. So, they are in that sense equal. But then we begin to build in unfairness or inequality. There has been some implication that, if the parents can't read, then the child is doomed and that the school makes very little difference.

It would seem to me that in 1965, for example, we attempted at the Federal level to do something about this by providing preschool education and compensatory education so as to equalize in some way this fairness, so that when a child gets to the age where they may be thinking of going to university, they would be competing fairly for that one-eighth top spot. But we don't do that.

Keep in mind that, while these early childhood development programs have proved to be successful, Head Start reaches only about 18 percent. So, 82 percent of the children at that age don't get a fair chance because they are among the 82 and not that select 18. So it is with compensatory education. Again, they don't get a chance because, if they have weaknesses due to their economic situation, they don't get a fair chance to compete again. So, they go through school, they are passed from one grade to another, if they stay in school. And those who for economic reason find it necessary to do something along the way, they just simply drop out. So, again, you eliminate a large group.

So, you get to the point where we are talking about that top one-eighth, having eliminated some of the best students, the potential ones who perhaps would do better than the top one-eighth. But we have eliminated them through the system.

It just seems to me what we have is a lack of a policy whereby we address these problems where they should be addressed. We test along the way so that we don't just advance a kid but we find out those that are failing, those that are likely to drop out, and that we should place the emphasis there.

I think, Dr. Anderson, you referred to making sure that reading gets the priority. But how do you make reading the priority under such a system? Someone else said we need to make a commitment. I guess Dr. Banks said that. But are we truly making a commitment or are we simply turning our back on the problem and jazzing around here in these hearings, talking about excellence without at the same time making sure that we have equitable treatment of individuals so that we don't fail them because of family background, fail them because of geographical location, or fail them because they come from families where English isn't spoken? Who's failing? It seems to me that someone somewhere else is failing and not those that we deem to be the failures.

Mr. **Anderson**. Mr. Chairman, I think your observations are absolutely correct. What we ought to figure out is how we are best going to intervene to break this terrible cycle.

I have already mentioned early childhood emphasis. You brought up Headstart. Those sorts of programs deserve emphasis. The more successful ones are now being widely emulated. So, we can expect greater benefits from Headstart.

Another way to break the cycle is, relatively simple things can be done, even with parents who aren't very literate, to help them do a better job in preparing their children for school and sustaining children in school. And then we need second chance opportunities along the way.

Those are three things that can be done.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Dr. Banks, would you care to comment?

Mr. **Banks**. Mr. Chairman, I think your comments are eminently sound and pertinent. I come back to the point of commitment. I think as we sit here in this salubrious environment, we have a national administration that is prepared to pull back on the concept of equity and excellence in education. I won't dare mention the

Brown decisions, which, of course, are under attack and subsequent Federal court orders.

But I think, Mr. Chairman, to be specific, the Ypsilanti, MI schools, a longitudinal study was done of the Headstart effort over a 12-year span in that school district, which indicated success for those who went through with Federal assistance. That particular success has been maligned by the national administration and those who are not prepared to make a commitment to those who are viewed as the losers in our society. And I speak here basically blacks, Hispanics, and the poor.

Until, Mr. Chairman, we face up to that fact, we are not going to have literate citizenry, we are not going to have in fact excellence in education. It is a mockery of truth to talk about excellence in education, with over 9 million black youngsters—and if you talk about Hispanic youngsters, the number is even greater—who are denied the equal access and opportunity that Mr. Goodling makes reference to in an earlier question and that you addressed very eloquently here.

The final point, I come back to the Marshall plan. We made a national commitment that we would rebuild Europe. We spent over $15 billion to do that. We have not made that commitment, Mr. Chairman, as every literate, rational person knows full well, to save—and I use that in a literate sense—black and poor and Hispanic youngsters across this Nation, sequestered in large urban school districts or in rural areas. Until we make that commitment, and the best demonstrability of that commitment would have to be human and monetary resources.

Dr. Brown has a very cogent point. I wish he would be permitted to speak on that point——

Chairman HAWKINS. May I interrupt, however? We have a vote. Mr. Goodling and I both are too late. I don't know whether we will be able to make it or not, but we are going to try to make it. In order not to hold you up, I am afraid that it would be best just to adjourn the meeting at this point and hope that we can call back the witnesses or at least communicate with the witnesses so as to follow up on some of the points that we cannot make this morning.

Thank you again, gentlemen.

Mr. BANKS. Thank you very much.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. The meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned, subject to the call of the chair.]

ILLITERACY IN AMERICA

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1985

U.S. House of Representatives, House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education and Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities

Washington, DC.

The joint committee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Augustus F. Hawkins (chairman) presiding.

Members present from the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education: Representatives Hawkins, Williams, Martinez, Goodling, and Gunderson.

Present from the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities: Senator Pell.

Staff present from the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education: John F. Jennings, majority counsel; Nancy Kober, legislative specialist; Reta Lewis, research Assistant and Dr. Andrew Hartman, Republican legislative associate.

Staff present from the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities: Elizabeth Hackett, legislative assistant.

Chairman **Hawkins**. The committee will come to order. Mr. Williams and Mr. Goodling are on their way. Unfortunately, Senator Stafford is ill today and cannot attend. We do have as the first witness a distinguished Member from South Carolina, the Honorable Robin Tallon.

Mr. Tallon, we welcome you to the hearing today, and we look forward to your testimony. May I announce for all of the witnesses that every statement, every prepared statement, will be printed in the record, and we would appreciate, to the extent possible, that the witnesses summarize from the statement so as to leave room for questioning. I think, in that way, we can focus in on the subject much better.

We leave it up to the discretion of the witnesses, and to you, Mr. Tallon. We obviously do not intend this in any way to reflect on you. Your statement is very brief anyway. But in any event, we're delighted to have you. You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBIN TALLON, MEMBER OF CONGRESS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. **Tallon**. Mr. chairman, thank you very much. I'm delighted to be here. I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify. I will have a more detailed statement for the record.

Again, Mr. Chairman, and members of the two subcommittees, I commend your efforts in addressing adult illiteracy. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you on an issue that is critical to the continued well being and productivity of our Nation.

Through these and further efforts, I hope we can call attention to this unacceptable problem, and encourage public and private efforts to reduce illiteracy in America.

Although education has always been a strong concern of mine, I was unaware of the scale, severity and implication of illiteracy in our country until I read Jonathan Kozol's book, "Illiterate America." From its first startling sentence, I was jolted into the awareness of the threat illiteracy poses economically, politically and socially.

Subsequent visits to my district in South Carolina confirmed the importance of literate citizens to South Carolina's future.

In my longer statement for the record, I point out the enormous economic, political and social cost of illiteracy. Today I would like to examine how we can begin to overcome this problem through combined public and private efforts. I am proud to point to my State of South Carolina as a successful model of a cooperative approach toward reducing illiteracy.

In South Carolina, the department of education, the South Carolina Literacy Association and the financial community have pooled their efforts and financial resources to produce an effective and efficient literacy campaign. This tremendously successful campaign is directed by a reading advisory council chaired by the wife of Gov. Richard Riley and comprised of legislators, educators and representatives of business, church and social welfare organizations.

Integral to the success of the South Carolina Literacy Association, a private, nonprofit organization funded by a combination of State, Federal, corporate, charitable and community donations. This association administers to the most basic educational needs of illiterate adults largely through autonomous local literacy councils. Under the direction of the association, the student is coached to the level where the government program, Adult Basic Education, can assume teaching responsibility.

In obtaining funds for both public and private literacy efforts, it is necessary to identify and coordinate the many resources available. For example, in my district, contributions from corporate citizens such as Sunoco and DuPont, the Business Council for Effective Literacy and B. Dalton Books, along with support from the department of education, the Job Training Partnership Program, VISTA, and the United Way, have enabled both the public and private literacy organizations to produce outstanding results.

Now, as a businessman, I understand there are four essential components for establishing a successful business: raw material, labor, capital, and effective management. I believe the same theory applies to a successful literacy effort.

The availability of raw material, the student, has been repeatedly pointed out during these hearings. The laborers needed are energetic, articulate, compassionate volunteers and professionals. The third ingredient of capital, in the form of public and private sector support, as I have noted, is available and needs to be identified and maximized.

The final ingredient of management is critical. In examining the literacy efforts in South Carolina, two factors stand out, the need for professionalism and the need for flexibility. A professional will be able to devote the necessary time to ensure visibility and organization. Flexibility ensures that the literacy organization can measure and meet the community's needs and potential.

I have come before you because I believe this is a problem that demands immediate Federal, State, local and individual attention and action. The American dream is the promise of opportunity. I hope we can work together to ensure that 27 million illiterate Americans are able to realize this promise.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Robin Tallon follows:]

Prepared Statement of Hon. Robin Tallon, a Representative in Congress From the State of South Carolina

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and the Humanities and the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education, I commend your efforts, in past and here today, in addressing adult illiteracy. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you on an issue that is critical to the continued well-being and productivity of our nation. Through these and further efforts, I hope we can call attention to this acute and unacceptable problem and encourage public and private efforts to reduce illiteracy in America.

To begin to address adult illiteracy we must first make the public aware of the magnitude of the problem. I am aware of the importance of publicizing the issue from personal experience. Although education has always been a strong concern of mine, I was unaware of the scale, severity and implications of illiteracy in our country until I read Jonathan Kozol's book "Illiterate America". From its first, startling sentence I was jolted into awareness of the threat illiteracy poses economically, politically and socially. Subsequent visits to my district in South Carolina confirmed the importance of literate citizens to South Carolina's future.

I believe it is important that America's citizens and leaders are also jolted into an understanding of the economic, political and societal costs of illiteracy. A brief review of the statistics on illiteracy reveals that it is a crisis of frightening proportions. Specifically, some 27 million Americans lack the basic skills needed to function in their everyday lives and workplace; another 45 million have only marginal skills. These numbers are even more alarming when viewed on a state basis. In South Carolina, nearly half a million persons, roughly 25 percent of all adults are functionally illiterate. But of all those who need help, only 16 percent are receiving it.

The impact of this problem reverberates throughout our state, causing extensive economic, political and societal harm. Illiteracy has been indentified as a significant determinant of poverty, welfare, crime and numerous other social ills. It is generally understood that income is directly related to education. Therefore, it is not surprising that among welfare recipients, the proportion of those who have obtained less than six grades of school is more than double those who have six to eight years of education. Further, the cycle of poverty, poor education, and criminal activity is well established. Statistics have shown that persons who have been imprisoned have lower levels of educational achievement than the population at large.

In general, the cycle of poverty, poor education, and criminal activity is well established. Translated into individual terms, the illiterate individual tend to be socially isolated, politically powerless, unprepared for work, and plagued with family and personal problems.

The economic costs of adult illiteracy are enormous. The great advances in American technology have dramatically changed the nature of work and the definition of work competence. The menial tasks formerly available to illiterates have been replaced by more technical and complex positions. There are costs to the business sector as well. Mistakes caused from poor reading and writing skills are extremely costly to business and industry. Not only are undereducated workers less proficient in carrying out their duties, but they can also be dangerous to themselves and others.

Other economic costs are the extensive fiscal resources expended to provide for the maintenance of the illiterate in such areas as criminal justice and welfare. It is estimated that approximately $13.5 million are expended for prison costs annually in South Carolina for inmates who do not have the equivalent of an eighth grade education.

In contrast, the economical and social benefits of a literate society are multiple. Increased literacy promotes employment, a more equitable distribution of wealth, and better utilization of talents. As a democracy, America's political health is directly related to the level of education and information held by its citizens. For example, a high correlation exists between educational attainment and voter participation. In South Carolina, 723 participants in Adult Education programs also voted for the first time. However, perhaps the most important benefactor of literacy is the individual. By acquiring the ability to read and write, an individual gains access to employment, increased communication skills and self-confidence.

The economic, political and social benefits of a literate population are clear. Equally clear is the need for a concerted and coordinated effort among the public and private sectors. Only through the cooperation and active participation of federal, state and local governments with business and existing literacy organizations, can the dream of a literate America become a reality. I am proud to point to my state of South Carolina as a successful model of a cooperative approach toward reducing illiteracy.

In South Carolina, the Department of Education, the South Carolina Literacy Association and the financial community have pooled their efforts and financial resources to produce an effective and efficient literacy campaign. This campaign is directed by a Reading Advisory Council, chaired by the wife of Governor Richard Riley and comprised of legislators, educators, and business, community, social welfare, and church representatives. This campaign has proven to be a tremendous and catalytic success.

Integral to this success is the South Carolina Literacy Association, a private, nonprofit organization funded by a combination of state and federal, corporate, charitable and community donations. This Association administers to the most basic educational needs of illiterate adults through autonomous local literacy councils. Under the direction of the South Carolina Literacy Association the student is coached to the level where the government program, Adult Basic Education, can assume teaching responsibility.

In obtaining funds for both public and private literacy efforts, it is necessary to identify and coordinate the many resources available. For example, in the Sixth District, contributions from Sunoco, Grove Manufacturing and Dupont, the Business Council for Effective Literacy and B. Dalton Books along with support from the Department of Education, the Job Training Partnership Program, VISTA, and the United Way have enabled both the public and private literacy organizations to produce outstanding literacy services.

I have stressed the importance of our adopting literacy as a civic priority. I wish to also emphasize that this is a goal that is as achievable as it is critical. As a businessman, I understand that there are four essential components for establishing a successful business: raw material, labor, capital, and effective management. I believe the same theory applies to a successful literacy effort.

The availability of raw material, the student, has been repeatedly pointed out during these hearings. The labor needed is the force of many energetic, articulate and compassionate volunteers and professionals dedicated to giving the valuable gift of literacy. Through public awareness, business and government support and community endorsement an effective labor force can be attained. The third ingredient of capital in the form of public and private support, as I have noted, is available and needs only to be tapped and maximized.

The final ingredient of management is critical. In examining the literacy efforts in South Carolina, two factors stand out, the need for professionalism and the need for flexibility. Experience has demonstrated the necessity for at least one professional per literacy council. In South Carolina, those local organizations that have a full-time or part-time paid professional coordinator are the ones that attract and retain the largest number of students registered and largest number of available tutors. A professional will be able to devote the necessary time to ensure visibility and organization. Flexibility should also be maintained in soliciting funds and students as well as in instruction. Flexibility ensures that the literacy organization can measure and meet the community's needs and potential.

I have come before you because I believe this is a problem that demands immediate federal, state, local and individual attention and action. The American dream is the promise of opportunity. I hope we can work together to ensure that 27 million illiterate Americans are able to realize this promise. Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Tallon. The Chair certainly wishes to commend you on this experiment in South Carolina.

With respect to the funding of the project and the numbers that are reached, could you be a little more specific? In other words, have you amassed enough financial resources to really reach a sizable number of those whom you have attempted to reach; and do you believe that this idea could be expanded so as to involve all of those who may be in need of such a program?

Mr. TALLON. Yes, sir. I would certainly hope that the program could be expanded. Frankly, through only the support we have now, we can't reach the many thousands of South Carolinians and millions of people across our Nation. It's going to take a commitment from the Federal Government.

Chairman HAWKINS. You say a commitment from the Federal Government. In what way do you think that commitment can best be made? Do you have any particular Federal program with which these efforts are combined, and is this a part of the educational system of the State or is it outside of that system?

Mr. TALLON. Mr. Chairman, it's actually outside of the system. The VISTA Program has been very helpful. I don't know that we can take an existing program and expand it, or through your hearings you may determine that we need to develop a new program.

This should be a national priority.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you. Mr. Goodling.

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you. What I would like from my colleague, since I'm trying to do something similar to this in my district, is a name and an address so I can contact them and find out what their pitfalls were or what the strengths were, so that we don't make the same mistakes and we capitalize on what they're doing well.

So if your office could provide us with that information——

Mr. TALLON. Thank you very much. I'll be happy to do that. I think that some coordination of these efforts, looking at the strong points and where we've made mistakes—I know we're all very interested, and would be happy to share information that we have in South Carolina with you; and we'll be in touch with you.

Mr. GOODLING. We're trying to combine the chamber and the Manufacturer's Association and the education community and the volunteer organizations, to see if we can't attack it from two angles, youth and adults at the same time.

Thank you very much for your testimony.

Mr. TALLON. Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Mr. Martinez.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Well, certainly, Mr. Tallon, I wish again to commend you on this project in South Carolina. It's highly possible that in some of the field hearings we will be visiting that region, in which case we certainly will keep in mind your interest in this subject, and may include South Carolina as one of those field sites.

Mr. TALLON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would welcome your committee to South Carolina and very much encourage you to come. Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

The next witnesses will consist of a panel composed of Mr. Woodrow Evans, an adult education student from Baltimore; Ms. Renee Poussaint, WJLA-TV, Washington, DC; Dr. Donald McCune, director, adult, alternative, and continuation education, the California State Department of Education; Mr. Jonathan Kozol, the author of "Illiterate America"; and Mrs. Sidney Savage, president of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia.

Would those witnesses please be seated at our table, and we certainly would like to welcome you en bloc as the committee looks forward to your testimony.

All of the witnesses' statements will be obviously printed in the record, and we look forward to a very lively session.

Ms. Poussaint, may I personally welcome you, because we have admired so much your contribution through the TV on this subject, and for you to take time out of your very, very busy schedule to come before us, we certainly appreciate that, as well as the other witnesses.

I guess, Dr. Kozol, we have quoted you so much, so many times, that it almost seems as if we know each other. However, this is the first privilege we've had of that, and I think I speak for the committee when I say we look forward to your testimony.

We will take you in the order in which you are listed, beginning with Mr. Evans. Mr. Evans, I understand that you do not have a prepared statement, but you are speaking from experience. Certainly, we welcome you before the committee. You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF WOODROW EVANS, ADULT EDUCATION STUDENT, BALTIMORE, MD

Mr. **Evans**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm from Baltimore, MD.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Could you pull the microphone closer. Thank you.

Mr. **Evans**. I'm from Baltimore, MD, and that is where my program is at for adult teaching. But before I started going to adult teaching, I was completely illterate; and I couldn't really function in life. It stopped me from doing just about—little things that people take for granted. For instance, reading signs, going into buildings, trying to find places, and even just playing a simple little game with my children, Trivia.

Then I started going to an adult program 1 year ago, and it has made enormous changes in me. I could start reading my own mail, and I can start finding places and start reading letters. It's a wide—things that I can do now that I never could do.

I am finding out that without the program I am completely lost. Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Thank you. We'll question the witnesses when all have completed their statements.

[The prepared statement of Woodrow Evans follows:]

Prepared Statement of Woodrow Evans

On October 3, 1985, I was given the honor of being on a panel to speak to you about adult illiteracy. Unfortunately, never having done this before, I did not come with a prepared statement nor did I give the opening statement that I would like to have given. I have now gotton over my initial "stage-fright" and would like to share my thoughts with you for your consideration.

No one but an illiterate can understand the stigma attached with being illiterate. You cannot possibly know how it feels to have someone comment "whats the matter can't you read" when you ask directions and a sign is in front of you. I cannot begin to count the times I've had to ask my wife to order for us in a restaurant. Because of this, we do not eat out very often. I spent many years of playing "cover-up". I've watched television talk shows, news programs and documentaries to gain as much knowledge as I could on various subjects just to be able to carry on intelligent conversations at social gatherings. I've never been able to read to my children or help them with homework. When papers were brought home from school the standard answer from me became keep them until your mother gets home. My wife took care of everything from the house, keeping a full-time job, our finances, homework, parent teacher conferences, etc. I covered up so well, that today my son who is 18 years old and a recent graduate from high school, barely communicates with me at all. We have a very strained relationship. Our relationship is strained because all my years of cover up were viewed by my son as indifference to him and his progress. Everytime anything important came up it was my wife that took care of it. His report cards were checked by my wife and when he had problems in school it was my wife that went to school for him. I was illiterate and he did not know it. He felt I didn't care to go to school for him or check his progress. All of those years are lost for my son and I. I cannot bring them back or change them. But, it seems so unfair that I could never bring myself to tell him how proud of him and his scholastic progress I really was. To him I seemed such a hypocrite telling him to do his homework while never looking at a school paper or going to a PTA meeting. I can only hope now that my problem is out in the open we can build a good father-son relationship and that he now can try to understand that I was not indifferent or uncaring—only embarrased at being illiterate.

I've never been able to hold a job for any length of time. I not only came from a broken family, but an indifferent one as well. I was never made to do my homework, no one helped me or even tried to. I was left to my own devices and since I was having problems in school, I just gave up. I did complete 6 years of school, however, I could not read beyond my name. I was simply pushed from class to class just to get me out and finally, I quit. I have been called a drifter and a bum, not only my so-called friends called me this, but my so-called family as well. I started to drink because after all if your family says you are no good it must be true. I thought drinking could make me forget my misery but it couldn't. I wanted to be somebody. I felt that I had thoughts in my head that were useful but I couldn't read so I couldn't get the education necessary for me to "be somebody". My wife tried to teach me to read but with a full-time job, a home to run and 3 children to raise there was not much time. Finally, my 16 year old daughter, who I did not know knew my "secret", kept bringing home fliers from her school about adult basic education classes. My wife and I discussed it and I decided to go. I was embarrassed and felt degraded when registering because my wife had to fill in the forms. At my first class I was sent home immediately because we were given a test to see where we were and of course I couldn't take the test. I felt lower than I had ever felt before, but I still went back for my second class. I was relieved to see a whole class of people in the same category as myself. After 1 year, I have progressed to a 4th grade level of reading and I'm back again this year more determined than ever to finish elementary school and get my GED. Adult Basic Education has not only changed my education status, it has changed my life. The first thing I realized is that my family consists of my wife and children. I don't need a family that thinks I'm no good, a drifter and a bum. I found that I don't have to avoid people and restaurants. I do look at my childrens papers from school and I even play games with them. I can read signs, my mail and for the first time I'm able to write a check from my own bank account. I've decided that never again will I be humiliated, degraded or have the feeling of utter desolation that goes hand in hand with illiteracy. I am going to get my GED and I want to take some college courses. I know its going to take time. I have to master writing as well. This letter, although I have dictated my thoughts to my wife, has to be written by my wife. I cannot as yet write a letter. For now, I'm satisfied knowing that I can read a letter.

My progress will be a success story for me due to a good basic education class in my area. But, what of the hundreds of thousands of adults who do not have a basic education class, or what if the Federal Government does not feel this problem is big enough or important enough to give the proper attention to it? You are in a position to do something about this problem. This country spends large amounts of money on projects that do not affect as many people and I cannot believe it would desert such a huge number of our population. I beg you to please look beyond the dollar signs and into the degradation that your funding would save them from. Again, I want to thank you for allowing me to attend your Senate Hearing on October 3rd, and also for taking the time to read this letter. Please, be generous with your support on the issue of Adult Illiteracy and the Basic Education Class in our country.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Ms. Poussaint, we welcome you as the next witness.

STATEMENT OF RENEE POUSSAINT, WJLA-TV, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. **Poussaint**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and committee members. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Renee Poussaint, and I am a reporter and anchor with WJLA-TV here in Washington. But I am here today solely in my private capacity as a volunteer tutor for D.C. Public School students under the Operation Rescue Program, a program that I've been with for about 4 years.

I've been asked to give a brief, basic perspective on the nuts and bolts experience of tutoring a child. So there will be no statistics in this testimony and no attempts at larger concepts and conclusions. I do not pretend to be an expert on the subject of illiteracy, and I bow readily to those who are. I look forward to hearing the rest of the panel members.

I am simply an individual who has been concerned about the problem for a number of years, and have tried to take what small steps I can in chipping away at the difficulties.

I think it might help to give you a brief idea of how the problem came to have such a central place in my own life. Before getting into journalism, I was working on a doctorate in comparative literature at Indiana University, and I was helping to teach a course in African and Afro-American Literature to freshmen and sophomores.

I discovered in the process of teaching that course that about 10 percent of the students in my class were functional illiterates. They could barely read the books, much less the kind of complex literary works they were supposed to be concerned with.

In talking to them, I was stunned to discover that many of them did not anticipate any major problems in their lives because of their reading difficulties. They had been promoted through various public school systems over the years, and felt that somehow that momentum would keep them going.

Several of them said that, yes, they were embarrassed about the possibility that someone would find out, but they were convinced, they said, that they could make it through life reading simple signs and forms and television, they said, took care of the rest, giving them whatever information they might need about their communities and the rest of the world.

They were indeed the products of a visual generation. Most of those students expressed very little interest in tutorial or remedial reading programs. It was too late for that, they said. They would try to hide their illiteracy secret and somehow get by.

Since then, as a reporter I've covered any number of stories on illiteracy and the often resulting waste of lives, the thousands of illiterates who crowd the jails and the unemployment and welfare lines, and the others trapped in low paying jobs, frightened that someday their inability to read will be exposed.

Those experiences, plus subsequent readings, convinced me that the most useful thing I could do as a private citizen was to join others working with children in the very early stages before those children began to feel that it was, in fact, too late for them, and they acquiesced to a lifetime of illitracy and the crippled future that so often entails.

I became a tutor with the Operation Rescue Program in Washington, DC, run jointly by the D.C. Public Schools and the Washington Urban League. In its 5 years of existence, some 3,000 elementary students have been tutored in math and reading with the help of some 700 volunteers.

The program screens tutors, gives them options for voluntary workshops on how to tutor, and matches them with a student or students in need.

As one of those volunteers, I report weekly to a local school I'm assigned to. In my 4 years with the program I have tutored seven children, most of them in the third grade, each of them with reading problems.

The program's appeal for me is that it is straightforward and direct, one-on-one contact with the child on a regular basis. I have periodic talks with the child's teacher about his or her progress and specific areas to be worked on each week, but otherwise it is just me and the child.

Rather than getting into generalizations, let me use a specific example of one little boy I tutored during last spring semester. His name is Donnell. He was in the third grade but reading on the first grade level. Like many kids who need tutoring, Donnell was not inherently incapable of learning. He was not stupid, nor was he economically deprived.

Most of the kids at his school come from working class families who see to it that their children have the necessities, but Donnell needed a lot of individual attention, the kind of attention a teacher with a full classroom often cannot give.

Somehow, early on, Donnell had gotten out of synch with his peers in terms of reading, and he had never gotten back on track. That is why he was one of the students assigned to the tutoring program.

When we first start working together, it was virtually impossible to get Donnell to sit down long enough with me to concentrate on any kind of organized lesson plan. He was high strung, energetic, and seemed to have a very limited attention span.

Understandably, he wanted to do everything but sit down and labor through the mysteries of letters that made little sense to him. I later found out from Donnell that part of that racing around and apparently short attention span had to do with his own embarrassment. He was only in the third grade.

Donnell was convinced that there was something the matter with him, that he lacked some magical talent that most of his classmates had that enabled them to make sense out of words; and he had worked out a behavior pattern which I found not uncommon with similar kids, of acting out behaviorally in order to distract teachers and other people from focusing on the problems.

In other words, if he could keep me busy trying to discipline him and chase him around the room, I wouldn't have time to make him try to do something, read, that he was convinced he couldn't do.

Eventually, we worked through that stage and moved on to the first tentative steps in the learning process.

Initially, I think the most important thing for Donnell was becoming convinced that I was serious, that I was serious, about this whole thing; and part of convincing him was the regularity with which I showed up. I think, in such voluntary tutoring programs, establishing that regularity is critical to establishing the kind of trust that's necessary to make the relationship work.

The child must be able to depend on the fact that the tutor will be there regularly for him, no matter what. We used his regular schoolbooks with special lessons marked off by the teacher.

Donnell's reading difficulty was that he saw no pattern, no connection between the letters in one word and the way they appear in another. Every word was a brandnew puzzle. If his class worked on reading a story, Donnell would memorize certain isolated words in that story, like hat; but if he later saw the word cat, a seemingly equally simple word, he would not have the vaguest idea of what it meant, of how the sounds of certain letters could give you consistent clues to reading any word, even if you had not seen it before. To Donnell, such an idea was totally incomprehensible.

So once we established the idea of trust, I began working on basic letter sounds, phonics, over and over again, making sure that we never went on to new words or stories until I was certain Donnell really understood and had not simply memorized isolated words, trying to bluff his way through as so many illiterates do.

That meant that we went very, very slowly. Sometimes we would never get to the teacher's lesson plan, because we would spend the entire time concentrating on just a few words. I would follow up by giving him small homework assignments, trying to get him to use the words in sentences that related to his own life, to write and then read about his own family, his brothers and parents.

I found that he was better able to understand the reality of the words in that context than when they were included in some of the fanciful tales outlined in his schoolbooks. If there was a so-called breakthrough for Donnell, it seemed to come when I returned from a 2-week absence for a reporting trip on the famine situation in Africa.

Before I went, I told him exactly where I was going and why. We poured over maps and pictures, and using sheer, unadulterated bribery, I told him I would bring him a little present if, when I got back, he could give me a little report on information he had found out on his own about the country.

He did, and I gave him a small book I had brought back from the country and a piece of that country's paper currency. He was fascinated by the idea that he had real money in his hands, and his curiosity led him to try to read what was on the bill.

Much to his surprise, despite the foreign sounds of the words, he managed to get through most of them. After the struggle, he turned to me and he said, I really can read anything, can't I?

In the final analysis, of course, Donnell's reading problems are not over. It will take a lot more work to get him to the level of his peers, and I feel very strongly the sense of unfinished business and obligation. But what was accomplished, I think, was the fundamental task of getting Donnell to believe that he could do it, that it's not magic, that he's not dumb, that it is not too late to try, and that there are people who will help him.

Volunteer tutoring programs on the elementary level, I'm convinced, can be important supplements to the schools in giving individual children that kind of confidence. They need it so desperately.

I am also convinced that, if the overall problems of illiteracy in this country are to be seriously addressed, the process must start in the earliest stages of a child's educational career. I do not want to see Donnell fall through the cracks of the educational system to eventually join the frustrated mass of adult illiterates, the corps of the semiskilled underclass in this country.

In closing, I'd like to share with you a brief letter I received at work a few weeks after the end of this past spring's semester. It is from Donnell, and it reads simply: "Dear Renee, I'm going to summer school now, but it's OK. My summer is not so bad. I have been to Wild World and King's Dominion so far for the summer. I miss working with you very much. Hope to see you soon. Have a nice summer. P.S. Your friend, Donnell."

That letter, committee members, was perhaps the best present I could ever have received.

I appreciate your attention. Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Ms. Poussaint.

The next witness is Dr. Donald McCune. Dr. McCune.

STATEMENT OF DR. DONALD A. McCUNE, DIRECTOR, ADULT, ALTERNATIVE, AND CONTINUATION EDUCATION, CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. McCUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity very much.

I'd like to bring to this hearing today a sense of practicality, if I could. We in California are concerned with a problem that is here today, measurable, large, needs response; and we're doing what we think is the best job we can under the circumstances at this point.

I'd like it clear in the very beginning that we, too, feel that the prevention of the problem, of course, is a very, very fundamental thing that must be done; and I can assure you that, in our department of education, our superintendent, Bill Honig, is working hard, together with the State board of education and our legislature, to move into improving the quality of our product coming out of the public schools.

I must speak, though, today to the other side of the equation, and that is the fact that we do have a large number of illiterates in our State, and that we are marshalling programs to respond to that.

When I talk in terms of practicality, I'd like you to know that in California in our Adult Education Program, we have over 1.5 million people. That's a sizable educational system. Of that 1.5 million, we have 650,000 or more in our Adult Basic Education Programs.

I want to make very clear that we have never used any of our Federal grant under the Adult Education Act to fund anyone at the secondary level. All of our Federal grant money goes into the lowest, those most in need; and that is a point that needs to be stressed, that the Adult Education Act does provide for that.

In the capacity that I'm here today, I am representing the State of California Department of Education, but I also have support from the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education, and they are also facing the practicality of how do we reach and how do we teach and how do we help these people through to a level of success.

We find, very honestly, that what has to be done is to immediately begin to expand the system we have. And as we have come through to this point in this problem, one of the things that has possibly motivated these hearings is a sense that those who are in need come from a wide, diverse population.

It's been said already here today that it's a political, social, and economic problem that is affecting this country and this Nation in magnanimous terms with costs to our society. We find that's true, too; and we find that those people are coming from every segment of that political, social, and economic system.

Therefore, what we are pursuing in the way of practicality is to develop a response system that is equally diverse. I am speaking against trying to come toward any one system. We are very much aware of the role that each of the current providers of literacy services are playing, ranging from volunteers to State ABE programs to business and industry efforts to that which is going on in the military, all of our public schools and all of our volunteer organizations are attacking this problem from that point of view where they are best qualified to reach that particular client.

We do not think that should be damaged. We think that it should be maintained. The quickest way to get to this problem, we feel, however, is to use the existing systems. By far and away, the system that serves the largest number of people with these services is that system which is funded under the Adult Education Act, usually referred to as the ABE programs within a State.

Every State and territory has this. I look upon this as sort of the base system that must exist to serve and help those other systems within this industry that we have of literacy services, so that they can make their contributions.

To be very specific, what I would call for is an increase in the appropriations that are being made toward the Adult Education Act, as a starter. I would submit that $100 million in the budget of this country for literacy services is totally inadequate.

In the State of California our legislature has provided approximately $60 million specifically for this part. You can see where I'm coming from. You might say, well, if you've got that much money, how are you doing in California?

What I would respond to is by saying we have 650,000 in that program. I can tell you that I talked to the director, the assistant superintendent of Los Angeles City Schools for Adult Education last week. He informed me that in their schools alone they have a waiting list of 10,000.

I would submit that what we need is to be able to serve those people, and to do that we simply have to have an expansion of resources.

I'm fully aware the criticism is, oh, you can't solve every problem with money. I suppose I would have to agree, except once again in the realm of practicability. I think that we must set a higher priority for the resources that are needed to get this program moving in response to the system.

I have made the statement. I would like to make it again here today, that I think in terms of the efforts that we're currently doing today with the limited resources, the lack of articulation among program deliverers, the increasing demands that we're having for services, whether there should be or not, they are—we don't have any recruitment problems. I can tell you that right now, and we're not really interested in spending any money on recruitment when we're having to turn people away. Those people are those least educated and most in need.

With all of that, the system is really doing pretty well, all things considered. So what I'm suggesting is that we do need to expand that system and its capability and its capacity.

In a study that I conducted with Judy Alamprese with the Business Council for Effective Literacy, we looked at what was going on in this country, what were the needs of those programs in industry and volunteer organizations, in community based organizations, in labor, everything in those areas. What we found was, yes, they are doing pretty well with what they've got. They just simply don't have enough to meet the demand. They need to train teachers. They need to do these other things.

If I could conclude with some specifics, and I'm looking forward to questions, I hope, subsequently. I would suggest that the committee needs to consider very carefully one section of the act that has not been funded. That is section 309 which would provide to the Department of Education moneys to be used to develop and improve this system, specifically in three or four areas that are mentioned in the act such as technology, to look in to see how can we utilize technology better. Frankly, I don't think we know much about it. Frankly, I don't think we're using it very well, and I don't have the answer to that. We need some help to find out how best to use technology.

We're looking for some leadership in working with the elderly and the handicapped, the immigrants population. And certainly, we want to explore more fully the cooperative efforts of adult education with business and industry.

Those things could be provided.

Finally, in my written testimony I suggested that we need to coalesce what is going on in this country. I have recommended establishment of an adult center, or an institute, adult institute, a national center, if you will, that would bring together leadership that is around in this country, focus the efforts and the energies, try to give the technical assistance and so forth, support the Department of Education.

By funding section 309, the Federal Government could assist in that. I would champion that it should not be a Federal enterprise, that it should be a partnership venture with those of us in the States, with business and industry and foundations, and could be jointly put together to operate relatively independently in serving the information and support need of this problem.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you, Dr. McCune.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Donald A. McCune follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. DONALD A. MCCUNE, CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. Chairmen and other distinguished members of the subcommittees—I am Donald A. McCune, Director of the Adult, Alternative, and Continuation Education Services Division for the California State Department of Education. My professional activities also include positions of responsibility in both the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) and the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education. The statements shared here today regarding illiteracy will, hopefully, reflect the thinking of these groups who are actively involved in this issue as well as the California State Department of Education, in particular.

The recent series of hearings on illiteracy conducted by the subcommittees represented here demonstrate the growing recognition of this problem and its impact on society and the individual. I have, therefore, chosen not to direct my remarks to restating the need to seriously address this problem at national, state, and local levels. Rather, the following is a brief attempt to identify some of the critical factors which must be considered in any strategic planning for reducing levels of illiteracy. I will conclude with recommendations for initiating actions leading to supporting existing literacy services and developing new approaches of response.

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Illiteracy has gained increasing attention in the last few years because of compelling evidence that the number of adult illiterates is large and growing steadily and also because of a recognition that people lacking literacy skills represent almost every level and segment of society. Although the increased level of demand for literacy services is very important and must be addressed, the developing awareness of the diversity of the illiterate population is a relatively new factor calling for the attention of those developing and implementing policies that will facilitate responsive literacy services. With those in need coming from such diverse backgrounds, it is imperative that we develop and maintain parallel diversity in the delivery of literacy services.

Another observation on the nature of the problem of illiteracy is that it is not an issue which is likely to respond to short-term solutions. The numbers of those now needing literacy services, the rate at which illiteracy seems to be growing, and the complexity of motivating and maintaining client-interest and involvement in the learning process mitigate against any immediate resolution of illiteracy in the United States. Illiteracy is part of a much larger socioeconomic problem Sticht (1983) for example, comments that illiteracy is transmitted from generation to generation through the process of illiterate parents and their children.

A final factor which must be noted here is the recognition that illiteracy is an issue which must be considered on a national level as well as at state and local levels. The impact of illiteracy upon this nation's economic, political, and social well-being is unquestionable. Being literate is an empowerment of an individual that helps to remove barriers to achievement and contributes to our future as a free people. Both public and private sectors must accept responsibility for providing resources and leadership at the national level.

CURRENT EFFORTS TO PROVIDE LITERACY SERVICES

The infrastructure supporting the delivery of literacy services is characterized by a wide range and variety of providers and conditions of accessibility. Harman (1985), Kozol (1985), and McCune and Alamprese (1985) have considered the provision of literacy services and identified those that appear to constitute a national effort in this regard. There is general agreement among their reports and studies that this effort includes the services and programs of: (1) the federal government through the Adult Education Act, programs for military personnel, and activities related to job training and employment preparation; (2) public school and community colleges; (3) voluntary organizations such as Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America; (4) libraries; (5) business, industry, and organized labor; (6) community-based organizations, and (7) correctional institutions and systems.

The success of these efforts can only be measured against the level of limited resources available, their separateness and the lack of articulation among the programs, the increasing demands for services, and the limited availability of those with expertise and experience in organizing and providing literacy services. I believe that under these conditions our current efforts are doing very well.

An overall assessment of the existing efforts as compared to the extent of the problem clearly reveals the inadequacies that must be overcome. Quite simply, more people need to be served; the scope of service needs to be expanded to serve a broader range of clients; there is a need to articulate existing services to maximize effectiveness, training, and staff development are needed to improve the quality and quantity of services; and we must have an appropriate statement of national policy on this issue to guide the establishment of priorities and the allocation of resources which will assure a future commitment to the development of a literate nation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The preceding discussions of the nature of the problem and the current status of literacy efforts form the basis for proposing the following for your consideration.

The most immediate need is to expand the capacity of those now providing literacy services. This will require a significant increase in funding. The Adult Education Act in its present form is an appropriate mechanism for quickly responding to this need for rapid growth. It has provisions for the support of community-based, voluntary, and institutional programs as well as the efforts of public schools and community colleges. The diversity of program providers must be encouraged to assure the availability of a mutiplicity of programs that will attract and retain a variety of client groups.

Section 309 of the Adult Education Act should be funded to enable the U.S. Department of Education to support specific activities in program development, demonstration, dissemination, research, and evaluation leading to more effective and comprehensive literacy services.

Support is needed to establish a national center or institute for adult learning. Such a facility would be able to provide a wide-range of functions and services necessary to focus on the needs of literacy programs and providers. Fostering communication among the provider systems, gathering and disseminating knowledge about adult literacy, articulating needs for research and development, and amassing information and data vital to the formulation of national and state policies would be some of the most important contributions.

Encouragement is needed to expand the technical assistance services of the U.S. Department of Education and the departments of education in the states. Guidelines for the types of services and the extension of their availability to non-traditional delivery systems should be provided and emphasized.

SOME ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Rather than summarizing this discussion on illiteracy, I would like to conclude with some observations that stand apart and need to be taken by themselves as they might apply to this issue.

1. The importance of the illiteracy cycle calls for renewed efforts to emphasize programs for illiterate parents. Attention to specialized recruitment techniques and the development of unique curriculum and instructional approaches should assist in this focused effort.
2. Mechanisms are needed to provide for the transference of information on effective literacy programs and materials from one delivery system to another.
3. Quality education in our elementary and secondary schools continues to be the single most important intervention in reducing levels of illiteracy in our adult populations.
4. The role of technology in promoting literacy remains unclear. We are beginning to gather experience with this potentially effective tool in the acquisition of literacy. There is much to learn about the effects of our present technology on the individual as well as on the development of literacy skills.
5. We still need to consider the fact that the basic literacy skills of reading, composition, and computation need to be placed in a context of usefulness in an adult's daily life. It is the ability to apply these skills that ultimately determines success.

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Chairman **Hawkins**. The next witness is Mr. Jonathan Kozol, author "Illiterate America." Mr. Kozol, you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF JONATHAN KOZOL, AUTHOR "ILLITERATE AMERICA," BYFIELD, MA

Mr. **Kozol**. Mr. Chairman, because of my concern with the fact of parent illiteracy on children, on the children of those parents, I'd like to start with 2 minutes of history.

Twenty-one years ago this fall, in 1964, I entered a classroom of fourth grade children in a slum neighborhood of Boston. It was my first year as a teacher. The 8-year olds who were entrusted to me had been virtually demolished by the time I met them. Only a few could read beyond the level of the second grade. This was in the autumn of their fourth grade year. Many couldn't read at all.

By and large, they were bright children. Why is it that their lives had been demolished by the age of 8? There are two answers. In school they had been the victims of an underfunded, overcrowded system, a system in which the textbooks were 2 decades old, in which there were 20 textbooks for 30 children, and in which, like many children in urban schools today, they had had a run of substitute teachers since the age of 5.

I was their first permanent teacher in 4 years. When I sent home letters to their parents asking their parents to come up to school to talk about the situation, I got very few replies. Like many teachers, I first complained the classic phrase. We say, why is it that the parents of the kids who are the most troubled never come to school? I soon discovered why. A shocking number of their parents couldn't read the letters I sent home.

They, too, had gone to schools like this a generation earlier, and they, too, had never learned to read. So this was the second reason why my students were in serious trouble. Their parents couldn't read to them before they entered school, nor could they help them to make up at home for what they missed in school.

I used to wonder whether those kids, too, would grow up to become another generation of illiterate adults. If so, what would happen to their children? Well, 21 years have passed, and now we have the answer.

Let me speak of only three of those children. I call them Steven, Frederick, and Angelina. Frederick is on the streets today. He's a pimp, barely literate. He has children he has never seen.

Angelina has three children, is illiterate, and lives on welfare. She can't read books to her youngest child. She can't read homework papers brought home by her older children. She won't read the book that I've written to describe her devastation.

Steven, whom I remember as a gentle, tiny little 8-year-old, the child and grandchild of nonreaders—Steven is 29 today. He's no longer gentle. He killed a man 2 years ago. The man insulted him as an illiterate subhuman.

He's in prison. He'll be there 20 years. It will cost us $25,000 every year to keep Steven in prison, half a million dollars in the next two decades. That's one steep price society must pay; but then, of course, there's a price that was paid by Steven's victim.

Mind you, all of these children entered school during the period long preceding any of the protests of the 1960's and the supplement implementation of Head Start and title I. Those, in short, were the good old days for which some of our national leaders are nostalgic, a time of excellence and basics.

Basic excellence for the children of those who are literate and middle class, basic heartlessness for the children of the silent and the poor. There are millions of adults like Steven and Frederick and Angelina, as many as 72 million, according to the estimate of Barbara Bush and former Education Secretary Bell. At the very least, 60 million, the more cautious figure I've used in my recent book. About half of those people read below the fifth grade level, the others below the ninth.

Hundreds of thousands against all odds do overcome their terror of humiliation and come forth to ask for help. I agree very much with Dr. McCune; but only 4 percent, less than 3 million, have been served by all existing programs.

In Illinois alone, 140,000 have requested help and have been locked on waiting lists for lack of Federal funds. Eight hundred thousand people in New Jersey are illiterate. Four in 10 Bostonians can't read the Boston Globe. Over 5 in 10 New Yorkers cannot read the news the New York Times sees fit to print.

In the fourth grade I used to teach children a lesson in how democracy works. Here's how the lesson plan goes. What do you do, kids, when you're facing a problem which can't be solved at the local level? And the answer? Write a letter to your Congressman, or as we would say these days, Congressperson.

I taught that lesson many times. I feel a bit ashamed. Even the most decent Congressperson cannot answer letters that illiterates can't write. You will receive no letters from the children I've described.

If all this was tragic 20 years ago, it's more alarming now. With high tech transfer of our industry, even those who might have earned a living 20 years ago by filling the rock bottom jobs in industry will find those jobs exist no longer. Blue-collar manuals require over 10th grade reading level. More sophisticated industries require higher literacy levels for retraining. Over 60 million adults cannot read above the eighth grade level.

Those who cannot read a manual cannot be retrained. Now with low level labor being exported to nations like Taiwan and Mexico, domestic industry will face disaster. By 1990, according to the AFL-CIO, anyone who reads below the 12th grade level will be absolutely lost.

Despite the rhetoric in fashion nowadays, this is not exclusively a local problem. Illiterates cross State borders in the search for jobs. Nor, of course, do criminals respect State borders. If, as we were told 2 years ago, the Nation is at risk, it would seem that we could find a national response.

We're told that private industry can do the job, but only 1 percent of corporate training funds are used for literacy. We're told that local libraries can do the job, but even the most sweeping library campaign launched by the State library in California serves 5,000 people in a State in which 3 to 5 million cannot read.

The administration has requested cutoff of the funds used to begin that program. We are told that colleges can do the job, but even the spectacular program launched this month by the community college in El Paso hopes to reach at most 4,000 or 5,000 out of 100,000 illiterate people in El Paso.

We are told that volunteers can do the job, but even the largest volunteer groups, both of them superb, serve in all 70,000 people. The largest Federal program, Adult Basic Education, serves over 2 million. But, as you have heard, because of limited funds, it is forced to lock hundreds of thousands on the waiting lists.

I find the waiting list particularly tragic. We often hear rhetoric nowadays, how can we get illiterate people to overcome their anxiety and come forward and ask for help. There is something cruel about turning the tables on those whom we refuse to serve, and asking why is it they don't come forward, when hundreds of thousands have come forward and been told to wait.

I wonder how many will ever try again. But let me lead to my recommendations in a couple of words. The Federal literacy initiative announced by the White House 2 years ago in 1983 was about as timid as the word initiative suggests. It's reached about 3,000 people. The President's words, however, were not timid. They were eloquent. In launching the initiative, the President said this:

> Let the lights burn late in our classrooms, our church basements, our libraries and around our kitchen tables, wherever we can gather together to help others. It is a wise and stimulating challenge.

If we had the funds to keep the lights on, we would have a chance to answer that challenge. But even the best volunteers cannot teach reading in the dark.

What should be done? Well, in the statement I have submitted to this committee, I've suggested a three-prong approach. The three main features are these:

One, target first, if we must limit our scope, target first those young adults who are most likely to be parents of small children. Establish adult/child literacy programs.

You've heard a lot this year about job related literacy and military related literacy. I propose we act upon the only motivation stronger than the longing for a job. I mean, of course, the love of parents for their child. Child-related literacy, a literacy of love, would not exclude job training, but it's major focus is empowering the parent to protect the child from the ravage of illiterate existence, by being able to read to that child in the crucial years from 3 to 5.

Two, tie these programs to existing groups that function not outside but in or near communities. Spare the parents hours of travel, the fear of getting lost amid a maze of street signs that they can't read. Spare them the discouragement of going to school buildings, scenes of former failure. Put the centers in a local church, branch library, storefront, or the vacant unit in a housing project.

Offer not just concurrent babysitting for their children, but concurrent early learning programs such as Head Start in which paid professionals and unpaid volunteers read stories to those children while their parents learn.

The ultimate success will come when parents can sit down and read those stories to those kids themselves; even better, when the parents can write down and then read their own stories to their children, a tradition as old as the Bible and as native to our history as winter nights in Colonial New England.

I note that Mr. Goodling has proposed something very similar to this.

Finally, three, create a teaching force built on a mix of paid professionals in programs such as ABE, volunteers, students on work/study, retired persons, an enormous resource we have failed to use. Add one further and essential group. Find the funds to hire neighborhood people, literate but unemployed. Take those people off the welfare roles, train them as tutors of people in their neighborhoods.

Then, too, they'll have another interesting role. They will know who in their neighborhood can read and who cannot. They, unlike outsiders, can go down to people's homes, go door to door, without intimidating anyone.

One woman in Ohio said this to me. She said, we can do all your recruiting for you. A wise bootstrap operation would remove that woman from welfare and hire her to be an organizer, a recruiter and an educator for her neighbors.

How could this be done? One means has been suggested by Congressman Williams: Create a National Service Corps. Use the young, use the old as unpaid volunteers, but also find the funds to hire people in the poor communities to do the most important job themselves.

One woman in Ohio summed it up beautifully like this: I said to her, what could you do to help your neighbors? This woman never graduated from high school, but she's literate. I could sit down every night, she said, and teach my neighbors right here in my kitchen. Just you show me what to do, and tell me what day we begin.

That was a woman who has almost nothing in the world except a whole lot of decency. There's a lot of decency like that untapped in America. Just you show me what to do, she said, and tell me what day we begin.

There are a lot of us, like myself, who can help to show her what to do, but only Congress can tell her what day we begin.

Thank you.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Jonathan Kozol follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN KOZOL

ILLITERATE AMERICA: What is the problem? What needs to be done?

The document attached to this statement is a letter I received from a woman who somehow graduated high school and went on to college but failed at length for reasons which her writing makes self-evident. I found this letter painful and have shared it with you for three reasons.

The first reason is that scarcely literate people like this woman are seldom asked to testify in public settings — or, if so, only after they have largely solved their problems and can speak to us of a remembered challenge proudly overcome. Most illiterate people I have met have not solved their problems and have little chance of solving them in years ahead without your most enlightened and compassionate intervention.

This woman, for all her difficulty, speaks in an imploring voice: "Im afrade to run out. I dont know if I can settle for noting." For 96 percent of the illiterate and semi-literate adults in our society, there is presently no other choice than settling for nothing. All state, local, volunteer and federal programs serve at present four percent of those in need. Millions are locked out or else assigned to waiting lists. All new programs instituted by the cities, states and private sector in the past two years serve at most another two percent. Meanwhile, two million new illiterates are added to the numbers yearly.

My second reason is a little more specific. This woman speaks of her child with a note of longing that I hear within the voices of a multitude of other people in her situation, although it has seldom been phrased in such poetic words:

"I came to you as a child — you fail me
I come as an adult — you still fail me
I bring my child to you...
I ask please do not do to them what you have done to me
We are crying
teach me
I have some thing to offer"

This is a plea which no member of Congress would willingly refuse. I will propose some ways in which, with your encouragement, we may enable her to offer what she longs to give to her own child and to our society.

The third reason I have given you this letter is a bit more personal. I feel ashamed that I could not reply to her. Although her letter, after a circuitous postal journey, did arrive at my mailbox, she neglected or did not know how to add her own return address. Therefore she has never had an answer. I am hopeful that, in the aftermath of information gathered in this hearing, the Congress of the United States will give this woman the answer that I could not give her.

I will speak only briefly of the numbers that confront us and the measurable costs to our society. My major concern is with the costs that are not measurable. I have in mind the limitless price that is exacted from the children of illiterate adults and the deepening burden that this places on the public schools. I will propose that only programs centered in the neighborhoods in which such people live, and organized in ways that can invite and then reward their rapid and unhesitant participation, have much chance of making an important dent upon the challenge that we face.

It would be understandable if members of Congress were bewildered by the many conflicting numbers that are cited. It may simplify this issue greatly if it can be understood that almost all of these disputes are arguments of definition rather than of numbers. Over 25 million adults read below the fifth grade level: a competence essential for survival and employment of the most conventional kind. At least another 35 million read beneath the ninth grade level. Newspapers are written at between the tenth and twelfth grade levels. It requires ninth grade competence to understand the antidote instructions on a can of kitchen cleanser, tenth grade competence to understand instructions on a federal income tax return, twelfth grade competence to read a life insurance form. Blue-collar manuals used in factories require better than a tenth grade reading level. Manuals for retraining of employees in the high-tech industries call for much higher levels.

I have argued that all of these 60 million people therefore ought to be regarded as "illiterate in terms of U.S. industry and print communication in the 1980s."

The largest cost in dollars is, of course, the heightened welfare burden and the loss in productivity. While this cost defies precise enumeration, it has been estimated in the tens of billions yearly. More specific items have been documented: It was reported last May that the Pentagon is forced to "write down" manuals of instruction to be understood by only semi-literate personnel. The cost of dumbing down the manuals for the B-1 bomber program, for example, will exceed $1 billion.

Note one other large and rather saddening expense: 85 percent of juveniles who come before the courts and 60 percent of prison inmates read below the fifth

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grade level. Whatever this cost — and, even leaving out the human price, we know it runs to many billions — we may note that criminals do not respect state borders. We are all held hostage to each other in this nation. A national tragedy would appear to call for national response.

The toll taken on the children of nonreaders is my primary concern. There are several ways in which the children of illiterate adults are placed at disadvantage.

Illiterate parents, first of all, cannot provide their children with the model of adults who feel at ease with books; far from being at their ease, they are likely to regard books with anxiety.

Second, such parents cannot read to children during the crucial early years before they enter school.

Third, they frequently cannot afford to purchase books. The likelihood of personal embarrassment inhibits them, meanwhile, from making use of libraries and therefore holds their children at a distance from the library as well.

Fourth, they find it difficult to overcome uneasiness in contact with the public schools (scenes of remembered failure in their earlier years) and, for this reason, they forfeit their potential role in parent-teacher organizations or in private meetings with their child's teacher. Many cannot even read the notes sent home by teachers asking them to come in to discuss their children's needs.

Fifth, they have no opportunity to supervise their child's studies, to assist with homework, or to scrutinize curriculum or texts; nor, of course, can they assist their children in the preparation for examinations or in choice of courses needed for fulfillment of requirements for graduation.

Sixth, they lack the leverage of informed analysis by which to recognize the problems of a school or to assess the quality of teachers.

Finally, even when they do intuitively sense the warning signs of a deficient education, they can rarely turn their intuitions into positive and helpful criticisms phrased in literate and cogent terms that school officials will be likely to respect or even understand.

While all these factors undermine a child's opportunities for educational success, it is the parent's inability to take a role during the pre-school years which seems to be most keenly recognized and frequently discussed by the illiterate adults that I have known.

I have spoken in the past five years with hundreds of nonreaders in at least

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two dozen cities. Again and again, I ask the simple question: "Why do you want to read?" The three most common reasons that I hear reveal parental longings of a soaring eloquence, tied closely to a recognition of the cultural starvation which their children undergo.

"I want to read the Bible." That is repeatedly the first reply.

Almost as commonly, I hear this explanation: "I'd just like to understand good books."

Finally, and related closely to these reasons, I hear this: "I would like to help my children. I don't want to see them doomed to lead the life that I have had to live."

One mother worded it like this. "I can't read to them. Of course that's leaving them out of something they should have. My youngest, Donny, wanted me to read a book to him. I told Donny: 'I can't read.' I tried it one day, reading from the pictures. Donny looked at me. He said, 'Mommy, that's not right.' He's only five. He knew I couldn't read..." She sighed and then she said: "Oh, it matters! You believe it matters."

Another mother spoke these words: "I look at my seventeen-year-old son and my twelve-year old daughter and I want to help them with their homework, but I can't. My son was supposed to repeat the ninth grade for the third time this year... He finally said he wanted to drop out... I see my handicap being passed on to my son... I tell you, it scares me."

Prayers like these must not remain unanswered. Certain people tell us in censorious terms that our literacy problems would be helped if parents would fulfill their obligation to sit down and read books to their children. They do not explain how parents who cannot read for themselves can possibly assist their children.

I don't intend to bury you in numbers, but one body of statistics may be worth brief mention here. Illiteracy cuts across all ethnic lines. It is identified with poverty, not race. The vast majority of illiterate Americans are white and native-born. In the State of Utah, where the population is almost entirely white and native-born, 200,000 adults cannot read and write. For those who are nonwhite, however, and for this reason far more likely to be very poor, the percentages are disproportionately alarming. Sixteen percent of white adults, 44 percent of blacks, and 56 percent of all Hispanic adults, are either total, functional, or marginal illiterates. Forty-seven percent of all black 17-year-olds are functionally illiterate. That figure is expected to rise to 50 percent by 1990. Women are more likely to be illiterate than men. Young nonwhite women for this reason represent the highest single concentration of illiterate adults.

With over half of nonwhite children growing up in single-parent, female-headed homes, it is realistic to expect that those who are their children stand in greatest jeopardy of entering that cycle of dependence which perpetuates itself from one illiterate generation to the next. If this should be the case, then for the first time in our modern history we may see the growth of a hereditary and illiterate underclass in the United States. To say that this would be a tragedy for our democracy would be a commonplace. To indicate how Congress may divine the means by which to fend off such a tragedy is far more useful; this I will attempt to do.

Two years ago, in the wake of the release of the Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education, the White House announced an Adult Literacy Initiative. "Let the lights burn late," said the President, "in our classrooms, our church basements, our libraries and around our kitchen tables, wherever we can gather to help others help themselves to the American dream." Two of the major aspects of the initiative were a Federal Employees Literacy program and a College Work Study program. Two years later, the first program has yet to be implemented. The second has processed about 8,000 people, but provided literacy services to less than 3,000. The President's words represent a wise and stimulating challenge. If we could afford to keep the lights on, we would stay up all night long to teach America to read.

The major private sector effort, instituted in 1983, The Coalition for Literacy, has had generous and consistent backing from the nation's largest bookseller, B. Dalton; it is, however, purely a referral and awareness service. Excellent state, municipal, and volunteer programs have been initiated or expanded in these years. California's State Library has launched a library-based literacy effort with a strong community component. The California program has provided services to 5,000 people out of five million needing help. A recent and high-spirited effort has been started in El Paso, based in the community college of that city. The El Paso struggle, led by a remarkable college president Bob Shepack, is exceptionally promising because of the diversity of participation. College teachers, community leaders, and commercial interests have been given unusually outspoken backing by a civic-minded journalist, Jay Ambrose, editor of the Scripps Howard paper in El Paso. Declaring the next twelve months "The Year of The Printed Word" in the El Paso area, Ambrose has advanced the literacy issue to a strong front-burner story and has joined with other civic leaders of El Paso by his personal commitment as a literacy volunteer. Students in the college meanwhile have been asked to fill the role of tutors and recruiting agents in low income neighborhoods. The atmosphere is energized and optimistic; but the odds this newborn coalition faces are immense. The program hopes to serve as many as 5,000 people. The illiterate population of El Paso has been estimated at as many as 100,000 people. Can this program persevere without some form of national support? I will leave this question open; but the difficulties here, as in all major cities of the nation, are self-evident.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

The key ingredient in California and El Paso, as in all of the best programs I have seen, is a commitment to authentic, grass-roots neighborhood involvement. The term conventionally applied to programs rooted at the local level is "community-based." The term is easily misunderstood and just as easily mistrusted. The word "community" is equated, in the minds of some observers, with an adversarial or bellicose approach. This misconception warrants brief correction. Whether the initiating agency should be a library, a college, a national organization such as LVA or Laubach Literacy, or one of the thousands of small neighborhood programs financed by tiny hand-outs, backed by churches, staffed by low-paid organizers or by volunteers, the shared ingredient is one that stands right in the mainstream of American tradition.

What is it that is so important about programs of this kind?

They tend, first of all, to win the loyalty of people with the lowest reading levels who are seldom drawn to formal, institutionalized and distant settings. They also tend to deal with reading problems in a broader context of the needs of children and of neighborhood regeneration. Their learners tend to have much better records of completion. Finally, these locally based programs tend to operate with minimal overhead, little bureaucracy, and therefore accomplish more at lower cost than other programs.

Illiterates have a difficult time overcoming their anxiety and terror of humiliation. Community programs overcome these fears in several ways:

(1) The programs are most often near the homes of those they serve. The fear of distance, of an unknown street, the fear of being lost amongst a maze of bus or subway signs one cannot read, is instantly diminished.

(2) The cost of travel and the loss of hours -- two hours' transportation to receive an hour of instruction — are removed.

(3) Weather and other unpredictables (a child's illness, for example) cease to be deterrents when the program is across the street or down the block. In public housing projects, where there frequently are empty units, neighborhood programs can create a learning center in the buildings where the largest numbers of potential learners presently reside.

(4) Recruitment becomes infinitely simpler and far more human when initiated by a person who is known, as friend or neighbor, to those adults in the greatest need. The stranger with a clipboard who comes into a poor neighborhood is not likely to be trusted. Similar distrust accrues to the recruitment office in a distant public building. (Schools are particularly intimidating places for recruitment. They are the scene of childhood fear and former failure for illiterate adults.) A neighborhood center also has the opportunity to draw upon the insights of those people who already know which of their neighbors cannot read and who, whether as volunteers or hired organizers, can provide the bridge between the learners and potential teachers.

"How do you reach them?" One poor woman in Ohio asked, then answered her own question: "You cannot do it by sitting downtown and mailing out brochures. You need to find the kind of person who can walk the neighborhood -- someone with a heart and soul. A foot-walker. Someone like that would know very quickly who was illiterate and who was not. That person has got to be able to overcome the illiterate's terror of the outside world... Sojourner Truth said: 'I cannot read, but I can read people.' So, too, can many of the poorest people in their own communities."

An enlightened fiscal policy would profit from this good advice by hiring unemployed adults, taking them off welfare, and assigning them the dignity and income of engaged participants in what would be a most dramatic and authentic bootstrap operation.

(5) The learning process in itself becomes more optimistic when neighbors learn and study in small groups of six or eight, drawing strength from those around them, helping one another, and receiving reassurance that their difficulties aren't unique but shared by those beside them.

(6) Instructors often are recruited from among the residents of neighborhoods like these. In neighborhoods where even as many as 40 percent of residents need literacy help, it is easy to forget that 60 percent remain as a potential pool of tutors. Programs like these will still need outside teachers and professional direction. But good instructors also will emerge out of the neighborhood itself.

Some of the most effective and devoted teachers are precisely those who came as students some years earlier.

A young man named Fernando at a literacy center in San Francisco told me this: "I came in four years ago because I needed help to read and write. I still don't write as well as I'd like. But I know well enough to teach. So I'm teaching, but I'm learning still at the same time. One day they said they had a job for a part-time director. That's my job. I'm getting paid. It's not much money, but it pays the rent."

There are thousands of people like Fernando. Few have had the opportunity to give as well as to receive. Few community programs have the funds to channel decency and loyalty in such constructive ways. Financial incentives to make it possible for former learners to grow into teachers of their own communities would enhance the stirring character of neighborhood regeneration at its best. This, in turn, would help to cut down on the settlement house mentality which plagues even the finest literacy programs. "People don't like you to 'do' for them," one woman said. "They need to learn how they can do it for *themselves*." This, again, seems at the very heart of bootstrap transformation in the mainstream of American tradition.

(7) Illiterate parents must provide for somebody to take care of their children while they learn to read and write. Daycare is provided with the greatest ease in literacy programs close to home. Far more important, children of illiterate adults can be provided early-learning opportunities in the same locations where their parents learn to read. Adult literacy centers, in an optimal situation, ought to be attached to pre-school programs.

Much has been said of "job-related literacy." While not disparaging one jot the value of this emphasis, I will suggest another concept here. I call it "child-centered literacy" — a literacy that draws upon the deepest motivation that most parents know: the love for their own child. The two motivations (work opportunities and parental love) should not be regarded as if they were mutually exclusive. In community programs, both can be incorporated in a single stroke.

(8) Where parents do not need or are not able to participate in literacy work, it is frequently grandparents (or another relative, an older sibling for example) who may join in child/adult programs. When grandparents are involved in the same programs as grandchildren, certain possibilities of story-telling by the very old to those who are the very young begin to summon up some of the most exciting memories of our American colonial tradition. Story-telling is, of course,

a Biblical tradition too. Experts have some complicated theories about "adult motivation." I believe that love is the most potent motivation in our souls. Wise government policy, tending towards a Family Literacy concept, might enable us to draw upon the longing of the old to share their memories and heritage with those they love the most.

(9) Finally, a neighborhood literacy focus helps to guarantee that those who learn will do so in a spirit of collaboration and of shared concerns. Institutional programs built exclusively upon the individual and economic aspiration of the learner tend to foster the desire to escape one's neighborhood and move into a separate realm of life. The consequence is something like a "brain-drain" on those neighborhoods which can't afford to lose their most successful residents. Community programs, by recycling successful learners into organizers, teachers, and recruiters, help to build more closely knit, more prosperous, and less dependent populations.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

This committee will by now have heard advice from other witnesses with a variety of specialized approaches — job-related, military, volunteer, and private sector — all of which command attention. It is important to add one caveat, however. All of these programs now exist and all together serve at most two million, or approximately three or four percent, of those in need. If such approaches alone had been sufficient, we would not be meeting here today.

In arguing for community-based child/adult action, I am proposing something new and something which offers us the opportunity to rescue those who are adults from present suffering and to help prevent the likelihood that we shall see another generation of illiterate Americans leaving public schools two decades hence. These are some specific actions which I urge you to consider:

(1) Congress might discover methods to expand the Head Start concept to a Family Literacy concept. Parents, older siblings, and grandparents lacking literacy skills might be recruited, through this plan, to learn both for their own sake and to reinforce the early education of the young.

(2) Congress might assure that public housing projects built with federal funds provide space for establishment of Family Learning Centers, sparing organizers in this way the cost of rental, heat, and upkeep for a literacy program. These are precisely the kinds of trivial costs which sometimes occupy about one half the time of organizers in the best (and always underfunded) local programs.

(3) Congress might explore the means of implementing the two previous suggestions in a number of demonstration models. These might be adapted from existing programs which already have established strong community support. In other instances (El Paso, for example), such a demonstration model might well be developed as the cornerstone of a high-energy project which is just now moving into operation.

(4) Congress might assist in breaking down the incorrect impression that volunteers alone can meet the problem. This is not to underestimate the volunteer potential in American society. (Retired persons, to give only one example, are a natural and rich resource which we have foolishly neglected.) But volunteers cannot be trained, assigned and supervised — nor can they find the neighborhood allies, the "foot-walkers" I've described — without skilled, stable, and paid staff. The choice is not between the federal dollar and the local volunteer. Without paid organizers and professional advice, we cannot tap into the volunteer potential.

In the interest of bipartisan consensus, I will refrain for a change from recommending vast expenditures. It seems only honest to say just this much: While it is clear that we can never be assured of getting what we pay for, it is certain we will never get what we don't pay for. With over $100 billion lost each year because of the dependent status of America's illiterates, it would seem self-evident that any investment in the demonstration projects I have recommended would be returned to us in unimagined savings. It is unusual to find an issue where the claims of civic decency so closely coincide with the most clearcut economic interests of our nation. Federal support for local literacy action may well represent the one good cause of 1985 on which conservatives and liberals, rich and poor, the business-minded and the socially committed may wholeheartedly agree.

One approach which might make sense to Congress is the possible establishment of a "Literacy Service Corps." For young and literate adults, such a program might become a national alternative to military service; it would be unfortunate, however, if such a corps were to be limited exclusively to young people. Older persons, as we have seen — especially retired people — ought to be encouraged to take part. On the basis of 20 years' experience in organizing volunteers, I am confident that the response would be spectacular.

Congress might consider whether such a literacy corps might be incorporated into an expanded VISTA organization or developed as a separate program altogether.

(5) Finally, serious thinking should be given to the hiring of literate people

who live in those neighborhoods of high illiteracy in order to enable them to serve as the recruitment arm and, wherever possible, part of the teaching force for the instruction of their neighbors. People who are willing to participate in work as difficult as this ought to be given high incentive to remove themselves from welfare programs and to form part of a bootstrap effort that will reinforce our economic and political well-being.

I have in mind a woman whom I interviewed in Cleveland, a very poor but undefeated woman who was living in a public housing project. I asked this woman, barely literate herself, whether there was something she could do to help those of her friends who could not read or write at all. "What could I do? I could sit down every night and teach them right here in this kitchen. Just give me help. Just show me what to do. And tell me what day we begin!"

Her voice tells us of enormous energy and decency untapped and wasted in American society. There are thousands of us at the grass-roots level who can help to show her what to do. But only Congress can tell her, and can tell America, on what day we begin.

Jonathan Kozol graduated from Harvard in 1958 and attended Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship. In the fall of 1964 he began teaching in the Boston Public Schools at the elementary level. Out of his experiences came Death At An Early Age, which won the National Book Award in Science, Philosophy & Religion. He is the author of several other books which draw upon his 20 years of teaching. His work with high school seniors in South Boston led to his interest in adult illiteracy, a concern which has engaged him for the past six years. Supported by the Rockefeller and Guggenheim foundations, he wrote Illiterate America, published this year by Doubleday.

[Letter received from an unknown adult]

JC

A Sure nights ago I happen to chuch the last 10.min of your show. And I think you were talking about people like me. You keap talking about reading AND writing. Well I have a spelling problem. I say spelling because when you try to Sine help in spelling you dont Sine it in a writing class.

Since grade school my teacher would say you need to leard to spell. And yet they never been able to teach me. So they'll say maybe you'll leard next year. I took english and writing classes and they dont teach you anlything.

So as the years gone by the more one has to hide once problem as you mention. As one try to Sine ways to improve.

When I finsh hight school I thought I wasnt good enife So college. But I didnt want to be a nobody - They say education is the way to anly thing. So I went to college AND found there were quite alot oS other people like me. But geting through college wasen't easie. Some time you have to repeat a class. I repeated classes 3 times be Sor giving up or making it.

You hear people say "no you cant take this because you dont make the grades. You never make it. But I keep trying because I want to

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be a better person. Im not ready to settle down to a factory job. I have hight intrest. I know I can do the job - but the spelling trows a lot of problem.

Im 33 now and finly have made a go. But the walls are up agent. and this time I dont think I can go around them. What Im I to do. I still have some engeny left. But runing out. Im afrade to run out - I dont know if I can settle for noting.

Whats the problem - I finly graduated as a surgical Tech. I can do the job well I know what Im doing. But if I have to put any thing down on ~~paper~~ papper Im lost. Id repeated my medical Term 3 times because of spelling. And work very hard to make it through my testes. Now Im a graduate it a best that one take ther certification test. Im afrade to take it and would prefeed not too. The chances of getiy this job would be to take this test. But not for me. It cost $200 to take it. on top of other things. One still can get a job with out it but very slim now days. Even thought times are hard they still ask to take it.

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I feel its just another way to block us out. We belive in ourself we try to improve there mind teaching - we suffer now by puting money after money in to try to improve ourself. But that all we do is spend what little we have in hope for a dream.

People like us belong in a factory or cleaning or table job. But Im not happy with these job. Sure there perfet one dont have to prove intholat. But its not for me - I finly found some thing after two other major. But the walls are up.

Its hard every time a wall turns up its like living when one loses reason for being alive he dies. So every time a wall apear one has to finger what to do. I alway been able to go around as long as I had a reason or a go. But now Im at a stand still.

The school has a spelling class that I would like to take. But the timeing haven't been right at the moment. Im not sure this class will teach me what I need.

You said to write you. You didn't

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say what. So what do you have for me. How can you help me.

My spech teacher onse said to me If you cant spell how can you teach your child. This is true if you dont belive in yourself how can you teach your child. Some manage to make it and some dont We dont know why but we need help.

The teaching system is importion -
I came to you as a child - you fail me
I come as an adult - you still fail me
I bring my child to you - for I cannot
teach them
I ask please do not do to them what
you have done to me - we are crying
teach me I have some thing to offer
but first I need to learn.

J R

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[Exact typed copy of handwritten letter]

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you have done to me -- we are crying
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but first I need to leard.

JR

Chairman **Hawkins**. The next witness is Mrs. Sidney Savage, president of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia.

STATEMENT OF MRS. SIDNEY SAVAGE, PRESIDENT, LITERACY COUNCIL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Ms. **Savage**. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I thank you for the opportunity to appear here this morning. I am Sidney Savage, a volunteer tutor and president of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, a volunteer literacy group headquartered in Arlington.

Our council is a grassroots, nonprofit organization which was started 23 years ago by one woman, and has grown to 500 members. We recruit volunteers from the community and train them to tutor one on one with the adult nonreaders who come to us for help.

We also help the many foreign born who come to our area to speak, read, write, and understand English. We help students who can't get help from other sources and agencies. Our goal for all of these students is to provide tutoring until the student develops the confidence and skill to help himself.

Reading is magic in that it gives one access to a world of wonders and expanded horizons; but from a less idealistic point of view, reading is a fundamental necessity. A study commissioned by the Department of Education in 1975 states that the reading level required to read the labels on three different industrial cleaning products is an 8½ year grade level, and a 12½ year grade level to read an average daily newspaper.

Almost everyone can be taught to read. Why have so many adults failed to learn to read? We can best define the nature of the problem by conveying to you what our students tell us.

They sat in class, did not understand, got lost, were shy and embarrassed, afraid to ask questions. They went to school seldom. No one at home cared or made them go to school, study, or do homework. No one at home read to them.

The further behind they became, the more embarrassed they became. The classes were large. Teachers were busy. Some students had learning disabilities, physical problems, sight and hearing problems, that went unattended. Some were hyperactive and became behavior problems, spent time being punished and detained.

Some had speech problems such as stuttering which intensified their shyness. Some had been abused, ran away or spent time in detention homes. Some moved around and changed schools often.

The most obvious characteristic of these people by the time we meet them is lack of self-esteem. They have usually spent a good part of their lives hiding their problems by one evasion or another. They come to us, because something at that point in their lives has triggered the need to learn to read.

The increasing literacy skills required in a highly technical society demands that they read to get a job or a better job; or they want to read to their children, understand their children's homework, and notes from teachers. They get tired of being perceived as dumb or being left out of things.

We interview them, assess their level of literacy, and go to work with them. The most significant change in the student after he starts working with us is increased self-esteem. We feel that the compassion and response of the 1-to-1 relationship yields this benefit.

Studies show that learning takes place when a significant other is involved and interested. Of course, as a student feels better about himself, he can do better in his studies and in coping with life. Twenty-nine of our unemployed students last year got jobs as a result of being tutored by our volunteers.

We need volunteers. The country needs volunteers. The role of the volunteer is well grounded in our national life. From firefighting to PTA's, the Red Cross, and United Way, volunteers have been mobilized and used effectively.

What would political campaigns be without volunteers? The situation is no different in our battle against illiteracy. In our council we have men and women of varied backgrounds committed to this cause. Volunteers can teach adults to read. Volunteers respond to the needs of their students.

We do not need more studies to define illiteracy and its causes. We do need many small, well organized outreach programs with communications and network at every level. We need coordinated partnerships with local schools and human service agencies and local business leaders. We need access to grants and funds from local, State, and Federal sources.

Volunteer literacy programs are extremely cost effective. In the last fiscal year our Literacy Council tutored 366 students for less than $150 each. But even volunteer programs cost money. Office space, telephones, postage, recordkeeping, all are necessary expenses.

In our council we have a small part-time paid staff to ensure the organization's cohesive, ongoing effectiveness. Our students attest to our effectiveness.

I would like to close with two letters the students have sent to us:

> Dear Pat, I am very happy that you are my teacher. I hope that nothing will happen that you will not be my teacher anymore. Sometime I feel like giving up, but when I see you on Sundays the first 2 minutes after I am there you give me the confidence to go on. I will keep on trying to do my best. Your student, Marvin.
>
> Dear Mrs. Sweeney, my father, a 72-year-old man, came to the United States with practically no English. He spoke Vietnamese and French. He spent most of his time in the house doing nothing, going nowhere. Since he could not converse with people, he was afraid of getting lost, could not ask anybody for directions to get home. Could not communicate. Therefore, did not dare to leave the house. We called the Telephone Assurance Program and, through that means, we learned about the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia. Through your program, my father, no longer living, at age 80 passed his citizenship interview 2 years before he died. Sincerely, Ngoc Dung Trinh.

Thank you.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Well, thank you.

[The prepared statement of Sidney Savage follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SIDNEY SAVAGE ON BEHALF OF THE LITERACY COUNCIL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA, INC.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear here this morning. I'm Sidney Savage, volunteer tutor and President of the

Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, Inc. headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. We are a volunteer literacy organization affiliated with Laubach Literacy and part of a network of almost 600 volunteer Laubach literacy councils throughout the United States. The other national network of literacy volunteers in Literacy Volunteers of America, with 201 affiliates. Our Northern Virginia Council is a grassroots organization which was started 23 years ago by one women and now has grown to 500 members. We are a non-profit organization that recruits and trains tutors from the community and then matches them with students who have come to us for help. Our tutors work mostly one-to-one, or with small groups of students.

We have two programs. In our basic literacy program we tutor native-born American adults who need help with reading and writing at or below fourth-grade level. Through our English for Speakers of Other Languages program, we tutor the foreign-born to comprehend, speak, read and write English. We are currently teaching more than 120 students in each of these programs.

We are all aware of the staggering statistics regarding the degree of illiteracy in our society. We feel there is still a hidden, unknown quantity. How do we know? When Johnny Cash appeared on T.V. our phones became very busy. When a nonreader speaks of his problem on radio or T.V. we receive many calls from other like him. The person sees his problem described by another and it gives his the courage to seek help. I would like to express the concern that our Council feels about this problem and that we are trying to do about it. Our mission is to help the student who can't get help from other sources or agencies.

Reading is magic in that it gives one access to a world of wonders and expanded horizons. But from a less idealistic point of view, we firmly believe that reading is a fundamental necessity. An Adult Performance Level (APL) study, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education in 1975 tested adult literacy skills in five functional areas. From that study reading skill levels required by adults as indicated by the Gunning Fog Index are as follows: 11.1 grade reading skills to understand the owner's manual for a popular American car, 8.6 level for three industrial cleaning products, a guide to Social Security benefits 9.9, and for nine news articles picked at random from a daily newspaper an average of 12.5. Reading is a learned capability which unlocks a series of potential choices for the individual to enable him to cope and succeed in life.

Learning to read involves the process of deciphering and deriving meaning from the printed word. Almost everyone can be taught to read. Why have so many adults failed to master this process? We can best define the nature of the problem by conveying to you comments from our students made during initial interviews. "I sat in class, did not understand, got lost, was shy and embarrassed, afraid to ask questions." "I went to school seldom, no one at home cared, no one made me to go to school or made me do homework." "The further I fell behind the more embarrassed I became. The classes were large, the teacher was busy." Some students had learning disabilities—physical problems such as hearing and sight defects that went unattended. Some were hyperactive, became behavior problems, and spent time being punished and detained after school. Some had speech problems such as stuttering which intensified their shyness. Some had been abused, ran away or spent time in detention homes. Some moved and changes schools often.

As a result of the above physical, emotional and developmental problems, poor communication between home and school, crowded classrooms with overworked teachers we have adult non-readers.

The most obvious characteristic of these people by the time we meet them is lack of self-esteem. They have usually spent a good part of their lives hiding their problem by one evasion or another. Perhaps they have miminal reading skills and can barely get by. Frequently even a husband or wife does not know that his or her partner cannot read.

Why do they seek help? They tell us it is because something at this point in their lives has made them want to learn to read. They want a job or a better job. They want to read to their children or understand their children's homework and notes from teachers. They get tired of being called "dumb" and being left out of things. They hear about us by word of mouth, from T.V., radio, newspapers, and from their churches, or libraries. Sometimes they are referred to us by other agencies. They need the one-on-one tutoring and the compassion and the response that such a relationship affords. Studies show that learning takes place when a "significant other" is involved and interested.

What does our Council do? We interview prospective students, assess their level of literacy, and go to work with them. Students reading at higher than fourth grade level are referred to other programs and agencies.

We have many case histories in our files of the successes and achievements of our students. I have enclosed several for this committee's record. The most significant change in a student is one of self-esteem. It improves immediately. Of course, when one feels better about *himself he feels better about the world and the world is easier* for him. Sometimes students have limited goals, and sometimes they want their high school equivalency diploma.

Whatever their goals and needs, we feel that we give them a leg up toward that achievement. We endeavor to give the adult student a chance to participate in the life of the community more confidently and effectively, and thus return to the community its investment in the form of increased productivity and tax revenues. There is a ripple effect at work also: our students tell us they are more interested in their children's school work, now that they are able to understand it. And they urge their children to strive for excellence in school.

The country needs volunteers in this effort. The role of the volunteer is well grounded in our national life. From firefighting to barn raising, PTAs to such organizations as the Red Cross and United Way volunteers have been mobilized and used effectively. What would political campaigns be without volunteers? The situation is no different in our battle to fight illiteracy. Volunteers offer a ready community resource. Margaret Mead said: "We live in a society that has always depended upon volunteers of different kinds—some who can give money, others who can give time, and a great many who give freely of their special skills. If you look closely, you will see that almost anything that really matters to us, anything that really embodies our deepest commitment to the way that human life should be lived and cared for, depends on some form of volunteerism."

Volunteers trained in using appropriate materials can teach people to read. Volunteers respond to the needs of their community. We do not need more studies to define illiteracy. We need small, well organized programs to attack this problem. We need coordinated partnerships with other public, private and non-profit groups within the community—with local schools, human services agencies, and local business leaders. We need communication and networking at every level. Our Council is ready to share its 23 years experience and expertise. But to do so, we need access to grants and funds from County, State and Federal sources.

Volunteer literacy programs are extremely cost effective. For instance in our Literacy Council's last fiscal year we tutored 366 students for under $150.00 each. This is a modest sum. But even volunteer programs cost money. Volunteers must be recruited, trained and placed with students. Students must be enrolled and interviewed. Although these activities may be performed by volunteers, funds are necessary for the office space, materials, mailings, telephones and record keeping that these entail. Our council also has a small part-time paid staff to provide the continuity, cohesiveness and program evaluation to ensure our organization's ongoing effectiveness.

Although we are mainly tutors working with students one-to-one, we are not inflexible. We also send tutors into jails to work with small groups, and train tutors who work with church groups assisting the foreign born. Some of our tutors are classroom aides in county Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language classes. We would also like to be able to send our tutors into apartment complexes and housing projects for small-group instruction or out into other areas to help start new volunteer literacy efforts.

I close with a quote from Peter Waite,[1] Executive Director of Laubach Literacy: "We need to make a hard choice. If we hope to make a significant impact within the next ten years, we need to commit ourselves to massive utilization of volunteers. If we want the same level of activity or only a slight increase, we need not utilize volunteers. If we make this commitment, then every discussion involving legislation, regulation, program development and research must address the utilization of volunteers. The battle with illiteracy can be won, but the use of volunteers in this fight must become a national priority. . . .

If volunteers are to play a critical role, then national policies must reflect a commitment to this human resource. Volunteers cannot be used as an excuse for minimizing or omitting core funding. In fact the effective use of volunteers will require additional funds designed specifically for that purpose."

[The following was received for the record:]

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[1] "The Role of Volunteers in Adult Literacy Programs," Peter A. Waite, January 19-20, 1984.

THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS IN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS, BY PETER A. WAITE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAUBACH LITERACY ACTION, NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY CONFERENCE

The Role of Volunteers in Adult Literacy Programs

> "We live in a society that has always depended upon volunteers of different kinds--some who can give money, others who can give time, and a great many who give freely of their special skills. If you look closely, you will see that almost anything that really matters to us, anything that really embodies our deepest commitment to the way that human life should be lived and cared for, depends on some form of volunteerism."
>
> Margaret Mead

If we accept the validity of Margaret Mead's statement, then we cannot avo[illegible] addressing the role of volunteers in solving the problem of illiteracy in the United States. Volunteers have been fundamental in a wide range of national, and social causes. Organizations such as United Way and Red Cross have developed serious, purposeful work for volunteers and have structured their organizations to capitalize on the effective mobilization of large numbers of volunteers. The situation is no different in our battle to fight illiteracy.

First, it is important to note that learning to read is not magic and the ability to assist someone in that process does not require an intimate knowledge of voodoo. Recently, at a presentation which occurred inside a maximum security prison, I saw a slogan, "Reading is Magic." Indeed, reading is magic for these inmates, as it was a key to a life many of them had never experienced. However, reading is not magic. It is a learned capability which unlocks a series of potential choices for the individual.

One aspect of reading which does remain a mystery, however, is the actual decoding process. While a step-by-step expose of decoding is yet to be developed, we do know that given three fundamental components a potential reader is capable of deducing the decoding process. The components are:

1. A comfortable environment. Physical surroundings must be comfortable to the student and suitable for learning.

2. Relevant reading materials. Reading materials must be appropriate to the students goals, abilities and interests.

3. Supportive relationship. The teacher, tutor, mentor, friend, pastor or other individual must be committed to assisting the person in learning how to read and have some knowledge on how to proceed.

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Given this basic structure, the average individual is quite capable of assisting someone in learning how to read. And, whether the teachers are certified adult education teachers or trained volunteers, if any of the three components are lacking, the process of learning how to read will likely fail.

Considering the growing commitment to solving the illiteracy problem in the United States, the questions arise: How can we make a difference? How can we direct resources to effectively solve this problem? How can we guide the policy makers so that national direction will assist us?

If we expect to significantly reduce illiteracy in the United States, program development must address the following.

1. Programs must be community based. Specifically, programs must be rooted in the community they propose to serve.

2. Programs must develop coordinated partnerships with other public, private, and non-profit entities within the community. This role requires serious memorandums of agreement targeted at specific action.

3. Programs will need to use large numbers of trained volunteers. This aspect of programming requires a massive mobilization of thousands of volunteers.

The focus of this paper are on the program aspects of these components. It is important, too, that research and policy making focus on these program bases. We do not need, as some suggest, a redefining of the problem of illiteracy. Nor do we need additional research in the area of specific literacy needs.

Community Based Programs

The term, community based programs, has become a catch-all for a wide range of social programs. As a component for adult literacy programming, it refers to programs which have specific roots in the community. These roots extend foremost to the proposed population of service--students. Also included is the greater community which defines the general living environment and which provides teachers and tutors.

It is not always possible for programs to start from within the community they propose to serve. Even Jonathan Kozol, long a proponent of community based organizations, suggests that "the outside spark" is sometimes needed to develop a truly community based organization.[1] Once an individual or a group initiates this outside spark, he suggests it is possible to share the initiative in the ongoing program development. These community based literacy

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programs may be sparked by outside assistance, and then develop effectively and cooperatively.

Having deep roots in the community means living, working, funding and establishing relationships within a particular area. Hunter and Harmon suggest that we need broad based input from communities to define what is needed in literacy programming.[2] However, they leave a serious gap at the program level with lack of recommendations on how we might seriously address this need. Regional conferences will not help address this problem. But rather we need to study model local programs which have successfully integrated local input and control.

We need to make full use of the community, not just the educational aspects. Programs must be housed not only in schools, but also in homes, churches, fire stations, and even the backrooms of local taverns if we expect to ensure that the entire community is served. Furthermore, it is important that the personnel who assist in this development process reflect the broad based community.

A quote taken from a UNESCO report sums up these issues.

> "Education suffers basically from the gap between its content and the living experience of its pupils, between the systems of values it preaches and the goals set up by society, between its ancient curricula and the modernity of science. Link education to life, associated with concrete goals, invest or rediscover an education system that fits its surroundings.[3]
>
> UNESCO Report 1972

Coordinated Partnerships

A classic story of Charlie Brown helps to underscore the issue of coordinated partnerships. This cartoon shows Lucy asking Charlie to change the channel of the TV he is watching. He asks of Lucy why he should change the channel for her and she shows him an open hand. Closing it slowly, she reminds him, that spread apart the hand is nothing, but clenched together it is a weapon that is fearful to look at and worse to experience. Charlie's response is to ask which channel she would like to watch. In final drawings Charlie Brown stares at his open hand and asks, "Why can't you guys get organized and act like that?"

That kind of coordinated effort is needed today. Everyone is "willing to coordinate", but few stand ready to seriously cooperate. Numerous letters for grants and proposals of national literacy efforts expound on coordination commitment; however, we see few concrete examples of coordination. Coordination, in this regard, means commitment and commitment requires sacrifice. It is this type of commitment and sacrifice that we lack in our attack on illiteracy.

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Specifically, we must require more formal linkages with non-traditional organizations. This must occur at the local, state and national level. Specific memorandums of agreement with clear action-oriented agendas must be forged. These agreements should be made with service and fraternal organizations, community action agencies, and religious, corporate and political organizations. These agreements must address the establishment of literacy programs and deal with issues of funding, public relations and human resources.

Formal programmatic linkages have been suggested by many. These linkages must become a part of all future efforts. They can take various forms from simple transfer linkages to developing joint assessment techniques. The key is that people must begin working together on specific projects. It takes courage to insist that we begin this cooperation. It isn't easy to admit that the other guy is not so bad after all.

Mobilization of Volunteers

As Pogo has so aptly suggested, we have met the enemy and he is us. This reality, which is true in many situations, is also true for the problem of illiteracy. We must face the reality that the problem is too great and the dollars are too few. We cannot expect success if dollars are going to be the requirement. Jean Paul Getty once said, "The road to success is easy. Rise early, work hard, strike oil." We are not going to strike oil, therefore, we need to rise early and work hard. And we need a lot of "us." We need a massive number of trained volunteers to achieve our goal.

Research and experience have proven that volunteers can be effective.[4] Effective and proven volunteer programs are found in a wide range of settings. While additional research may be helpful, at this time it is only an excuse if we allow the constant assessment of programs to stand in the way of implementing worthwhile proven projects.

We must be realistic about the utilization of volunteers. Alone, they are not the answer for all problems. We must build on existing adult education structures to ensure a network of professionals and volunteers working together. United Way raises hundreds of millions of dollars every year through a sophisticated network of trained volunteers. Many individuals commit substantial portions of their time to this cause. Our challenge is to become more sophisticated in our use of volunteers. We have not yet developed mechanisms to ensure effective utilization of this untapped resource. Without national commitment to address this problem, we lack the ability to use the single most important resource available in the fight agains illiteracy.

We need to make a hard choice. If we hope to make a significant impact within the next ten years, we need to

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commit ourselves to massive utilization of volunteers. If we want the same level of activity or only a slight increase, we need not utilize volunteers. If we make this commitment, then every discussion involving legislation, regulation, program development and research must address the utilization of volunteers. The battle with illiteracy can be won, but the use of volunteers in this fight must become a national priority.

National Implications

Some national implications of the commitment to volunteerism in literacy are clear while others are not. Certainly, one of the most important is in the area of research. Wide areas of research on illiteracy could be conducted with interest and vigor. However, it is clear that we have neither the time nor the resources to do all that we would like. This means we don't need to redefine the problem, nor spend large amounts of time addressing which literacy skills are better and which are needed the most. Basically, we must offer potential students the opportunity to learn communications and survival skills. These individuals will then be able to make choices effecting their own lives.

It is frequently easier to obtain money for new studies than it is for continuation and expansion of proven pilot projects. We clearly need to reverse this trend and begin to assess what works well and how to build on it.

The allocation of existing and new resources must be examined. Dollars should be directed at development and implementation of programs which serve the client. Communities with great need must be targetted and be given priority.

If volunteers are to play a critical role, then national policies must reflect a commitment to this human resource. Volunteers cannot be used as an excuse for minimizing or omitting core funding. In fact the effective use of volunteers will require additional funds designed specifically for that purpose.

These national implications point to one overriding issue: a lack of national commitment. The creativity exists. Now is the time for hard work and commitment to ensure that we can develop the programs and policies which will significantly reduce illiteracy.

Summary

We are at a critical juncture for literacy. Increased interest, increased exposure and a growing national awareness have begun to make literacy a national issue. We must not be afraid to attack the problem. Solutions are at hand. We can spend time avoiding hard work and commitment and address the problem by studying it or we can roll up our sleeves and get to work.

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Community-based coordinated programs which utilize massive numbers of volunteers can and will begin to solve the problem of illiteracy in the United States. Programs with these elements will be stable and will meet the diverse needs of communities by assisting them in setting up and directing their own programs.

The time has past for broad national or regional conferences to be convened to discuss the problem. It is time now for the development of local programs that are started by convening local community "conferences" of identified leaders. If we want stable self-sufficient programs, we will need to build from the bottom up and not trickle down.

Communities stand ready to accept this challenge so long as they are assisted and supported in the initial steps. We must stop debating what type of support and assistance, and start providing what we can, and quickly.

We cannot insure that we will solve the problem of illiteracy in the United States with these approaches, but we can guarantee that we will make a very significant impact on the problem. Programs which are designed with these components will be successful. We will need to rise early, and to work hard, but we will not need to strike oil.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper addresses the role of volunteers in adult literacy programming. Linking the critical participation of volunteers with coordinated community-based programs, it suggests that these components can provide the framework for a successful attack on the problem of adult illiteracy in the United States. It is underscored that this approach is not without cost and organizational sacrifice. Finally, the paper suggests that serious inroads can be made with a greater commitment to action and less to study of the problem.

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To whom this may concern,

Mimi [illegible] is a very good teacher. I can relate to everything she is saying. I am glad to have her teaching me. She is a very nice person to be around. I just hope that nothing will happin so that we can continue this to the end, Because she has brought me a long way, in a very short time. I have been waiting to learn for a long time, and this is really helping me.

[illegible]

Roger A Strauderman

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Dear pal,
I am very happy that you
are my teacher.
I hope that nothing will
happen, that you will not be my
teacher any more.
Some time I feel like giving
up, but When I see you on
Sundys the frist two minutes
after Iam there, you give me
the confident to go on.
I will keep on trying to do
my best.

your student,
Marvin

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LITERACY COUNCIL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA, Inc.

Some case histories taken from tutors' quarterly reports:

A woman in her early thirties was referred to us by the Department of Social Services, Child Protective Branch. Her two small babies kept her homebound. The tutor began working with her. The student's home was chaos--dirty, unorganized. The student began in Skillbook 1 and was finishing Skillbook 4 in a little over a year. Her self-confidence increased enormously. She began to be angry at all those who had told her she was "dumb" during her early years. The home began to look better. She reads to the children now, is reading the notices that come home from school with her older children, and has begun to look at the newspaper "News For You", to find articles that refer to items she has heard about on TV.

A young man of 23 was referred to us after his mother read an Ann Landers letter on illiteracy. He had gone through a couple of years of college but in our interview, it seemed clear that there was some kind of learning disability. The tutor began in Skillbook 1. The student progressed to Skillbook 4 in seven months. There has been progress in his ability to hear and sound out the short vowel sounds. His word-attack skills are immensely improved. This case affirmed that working with learning disabled people can be fruitful. The Laubach Method is helpful to some of these students.

A tutor began working with a student who heard about us through her Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. The student was 30 years old and had a 7th grade education. Because she had been sick, she had missed school often. Her family situation added to her problems. She came to us embarrassed by her lack of reading and writing skill, but hoping to train for a clerical job in the future. She progressed to Skillbook 4 in one year. Her tutor writes how thrilled she was to be able to join the church choir because she could now read. Her aim is to go on and get her high school diploma--and her clerical job.

S. J. is a Mexican American student who dropped out of school at the age of 6 to work in the fields alongside his family. That was 50 years ago. He has always worked with his hands and managed to support his own growing family. Last year he injured his back and could no longer do manual work. He began taking reading lessons from one of our tutors, on the advice of his rehabilitative counselor. He has progressed through Skillbooks 1 and 2 and is now looking toward what I call "Job Literacy" to get off assistance and forge a new career for himself.

H. W. is an athletic Black man in his mid 20s. In the middle of his senior year of high school his family moved and he never re-enrolled. A special education student, he found it difficult to get a job with his limited reading ability and lack of a high school diploma. When he came to us, after hearing about us through a local newspaper article, he was working as a janitor and earning less than $2 an hour, part time. After several months of tutoring, and with the encouragement he felt at seeing his own progress, this shy young man sought out and landed a fulltime custodial job with a local school system where he earns a good pay and has health benefits.

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Adults Who Can't Read

Help for Illiterates Goal of U.S. Campaign

By [illegible]
Washington Post Staff Writer

Until Gilbert Hughes, 33, was divorced last fall, his wife paid all the bills and answered all the mail. At the Northern Virginia aluminum siding company Hughes owns, a foreman handled the invoices. When his two young children asked him to read, he would look at the pictures and make up a story.

For years the successful businessman relied on his memory and a small tape recorder to preserve names, phone numbers and directions.

"I would say things to myself over and over and over," Hughes said recently. "If I go to a place the first time, I can get back there. It's like a handicapped person, in a way—when you lose your sight, you get something else."

Six months ago, Hughes pulled out his tape recorder and called the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, located in Arlington, for directions to its office.

"You can fool a lot of people out there," he said. "But I just decided it was about time I learned how to read."

See ILLITERATES, A8, Col. 1

National Campaign Seeks to Locate, Teach 27 Million Adult Illiterates

ILLITERATES, From A1

Hughes is one of an estimated 4 million adults in the United States now learning to read with the help of literacy councils, Adult Basic Education classes, church volunteers and business groups.

But for every Gilbert Hughes, education experts say, there are several others who are not being taught, who are not getting any closer to being able to decipher a street sign, read a medicine label or fill out a job application.

The 27 million adults nationwide estimated to be functionally illiterate are the focus of a national awareness campaign by literacy and education organizations and the Advertising Council.

At the same time, some local officials, education groups and literacy volunteers, watching the struggles of illiterate adults firsthand, have begun to channel more attention—and money—toward teaching adults to read.

Illiteracy "tends to be a hidden need," said Bill Bliss, a language specialist at the Center for Applied Linguistics in the District. "There is a phenomenon of adults who manage to hide the fact that they cannot read. They are . . . quietly and not visibly struggling to cope, just fumbling along."

Some illiterate adults, such as Mary Ratan, cope by backing away from life.

Until Ratan, a 38-year-old mother of six children ranging in age from 20 to 7, divorced her husband and moved to Springfield in 1975, she didn't do anything that might risk getting lost or confused by words she couldn't read.

"I wouldn't take a bus; if I had to go somewhere, I would always take a cab," she said recently.

Ratan, the oldest girl in a family of 14 children, said she attended school sporadically while growing up in The Plains, Va. But it wasn't until two years ago, while struggling as a single parent, that she began to feel the gap in her education.

Ratan and her 10-year-old daughter Odessa "weren't getting along like we should because she could read and I couldn't," Ratan said. Then another daughter, who is handicapped and mentally retarded, brought some papers home from school and asked for her mother's signature.

GILBERT HUGHES
. . . relied on memory, tape recorder

ILLITERATES: WHO THEY ARE

- Ages: 10% of persons 18-29 years old; 11% of those 30-39; 19% of those 40-49; 28% of those 50-59; 35% of those 60 or older.
- Sex: 17% of all men 18 or older; 23% of women 18 or older.

"I thought it was for a field trip," Ratan said. She was horrified later to learn she had signed documents to put her daughter in a home for retarded children.

At that moment, Ratan said, she knew she had to learn to read.

Nearly two years later, Ratan sits beside her tutor, Walt Watkins, at the table in her neat kitchen and reads slowly but clearly through the literacy council's Level 3 workbook.

Ratan remembers the first word she learned, after she and Watkins had practiced consonants and short vowel sounds for what seemed an eternity. She read "bird." Then "dish." Then "cup."

Now "when the kids bring something home, I know what it is. I can write letters," Ratan said with a smile. She sent Watkins a Christmas card last year. And she said there are fewer problems getting along with Odessa: "She doesn't look down on me anymore."

Literacy experts say there is no typical adult illiterate. But often, they note, events such as divorce, the birth of children, a job promotion or retirement prompt adults who have managed for years without reading to call for help.

Until then, they say, adults who can't read often cope by establishing unvarying routines for daily life and facing new situations with frequently ingenious ploys.

Adults who are illiterate "develop very good visual and aural memories," said Elsa Angel, president of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia. "Or they make excuses," for instance, telling a supermarket worker they forgot their glasses or asking another customer to point out a special brand of food.

Some, such as Hughes, excel in their jobs, successfully hiding their reading problems from most friends and colleagues.

When he telephoned clients, Hughes explained recently, "I would say, 'How do you spell that?' and spit it into the tape recorder real fast."

Hughes can't recall anyone ever trying to teach him to read, but he vividly remembers growing more frustrated and disillusioned with each grade he attended in Richmond public schools.

"When you can't read, you become a troublemaker. Kids embarrass you," he said last week, relaxing in the living room of his tutor's Annandale home. "I got disgusted with it. Everyone else could do it and, heck, I couldn't. I'd sit down and try, and throw the book across the room."

By the seventh grade, Hughes said, he couldn't stand to be in school. He went to class 75 days that year and skipped 83. When his father asked him to join the family business, Hughes, then 14, quit school and went to work.

"We're not stupid people," Hughes said. "I just didn't find the time in my life to do something I was supposed to do."

In Arlington, officials said, it was the parents of some refugee children—rather than people born and educated in the United States—who spurred them to look at the problem of illiteracy in the county.

Teachers in the schools' English as a Second Language (ESOL) and High Intensity Language Training (HILT) programs often sent students home with notes and announcements translated into the family's native Khmer, Spanish or Vietnamese.

They gradually realized, said ESOL/HILT project coordinator Kathy Panfil, that the translations frequently were meaningless because many of the parents of refugee children were illiterate in their own languages as well.

That realization helped prompt a March conference on literacy and a $70,000 appropriation from the Arlington County Board to fund language training for people who do not speak English.

The problems of native-born illiterate adults also hit home, and the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia received public funding—$10,000 from Arlington County and $30,000 from Fairfax County—for the first time this year.

All four area literacy councils—from Northern Virginia, Montgomery County, Prince George's County and the District—recently formed a coalition to share information and referrals.

And Washington soon will be the one of a national demonstration project, being tested in 25 locations nationwide, in which people over 55 are recruited to teach literacy to others of the same age.

Nearly all teachers of literacy agree that adult students need to build confidence and self-esteem as much as they need to learn spelling rules and consonant blends.

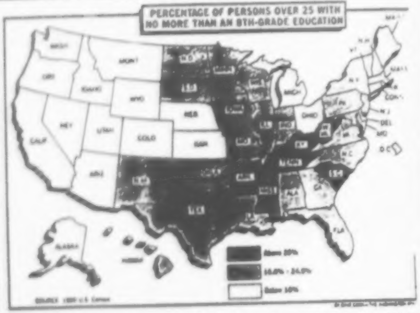
"For the majority of adults, it's [a problem of] having failed in other programs and fearing failing again," said Michael Fox, executive director of the District's Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN). "It's going through 12 years of school believing that next year someone was going to teach them how to read, and it didn't happen."

For Victor, an employe for a Northern Virginia furniture company, the fear of failing or being embarrassed by illiteracy was nearly paralyzing.

Victor, who asked that his last name not be used, moved from New York with his wife 2½ years ago and delayed looking for a job for four months because he panicked at the prospect of filling out applications.

He had dropped out of Manhattan's Vocational and Technical High School in the 10th grade and used to fear being humiliated if an employer asked him to write down his experience or educational background.

"I couldn't spell 'Manhattan,' let alone 'vocational,'" Victor said. "I thought, here I am, 34 years old, and I can't even fill out a simple application."



PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS OVER 25 WITH NO MORE THAN AN 8TH-GRADE EDUCATION

SOURCE: 1980 U.S. Census

By [illegible]—The Washington Post

In restaurants, Victor said, he would order the same thing every time. He memorized one bus route and never took a different one. Early this year, an unemployment counselor advised him to seek tutoring.

Literacy experts and the adults they teach say the process is painstaking, but rich with the excitement of cracking a code—sounding out a street sign for the first time or looking up an unfamiliar word in the dictionary.

After four months of twice-weekly sessions, Victor said, "I could bring myself to pick up a book and try to read it. Before, why bother trying? I would know only two words and the third would stop me."

Mary Ratan can write letters now and order from catalogues, but she wants to learn enough to read the Bible to her children. "That's what I want to do more than anything else," she said.

Gilbert Hughes can slowly decipher letters that come to the house and read the dialogue in comic strips, although the letters [illegible] and [illegible] sometimes confuse him.

"It's no fun—not at first," he said. "I guess it will be later, when you can read different books."

Hughes hopes eventually to read the newspaper or books on history, one of the heavy hard-backed volumes his friends sometimes carry. "It must be nice to do that," he [illegible]

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Journal photo by Tracy Woodward

Tutor Noel Sipple, with client above, is an English professor at NVCC.

For adults who can't read, a fresh chance to catch up

Programs match clients with tutors throughout N.Va.

By JEFF BARON
Journal staff writer

Jim Fisher recalls his first victory over words:

"It was a note left on my time card — directions what to do, what not to do that morning — and I could read it. It was only three or four words, but otherwise I would have had to go to the supervisor and ask what it said."

A year ago, Fisher (not his real name) was functionally illiterate. An Annandale resident in his mid-40s, Fisher could recognize the letters of the alphabet but couldn't say what each one sounded like. Yet he is an intelligent, hard-working man who stayed in school into the 10th grade.

Literacy experts estimate Fisher was one of the 20 percent of adult Americans who cannot read and write well enough to do the simple things the rest of society takes for granted.

They cannot read stories to their children, read hymns in church, or read road signs on highways. They cannot write checks or take telephone messages.

In Northern Virginia, the best available figures show that one in eight adults cannot read and write, according to Jean Sweeney, executive director of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, the major volunteer group fighting illiteracy.

The figures are uncertain because the people they represent keep their secret well.

"My mother knows I don't know how to read, and my wife knows, and now you do," one man told Sweeney when he came to the Literacy Council for help.

The initial evaluation on another Literacy Council client described her this way: "Very attractive, well-spoken woman. Appears self-confident. Hard to believe she can't read a word."

Please see READING, A5

Programs offer a fresh chance

READING from A1

Each of these people reached adulthood unable to read for a different reason, but Jim Fisher's case is similar to many others. As a child in school, he didn't catch on to reading, and he never caught up.

Fisher said he was one of 10 children in a farming family in rural Virginia. His parents never had much time to make sure the children were doing well in school, but as a dutiful, athletic boy, Fisher moved up from year to year until his family moved to Fairfax County.

At Fairfax High School, Fisher did well as an athlete but poorly in classes. "I asked for help, but at that time it was 50, 60 kids in a class, and there was no way the teacher could give you any," he recalled.

So at age 16, in 10th grade, Fisher dropped out of school. He passed his written test for a driver's license because the woman who administered the test was willing to read him the questions. He passed a state licensing exam to become a milk processor by studying the 16-page booklet for four months, laboriously working out the words.

He worked to put his first wife through college so she could become a teacher, but she didn't find the time to teach him to read. Their son learned not to ask Fisher to help him with schoolwork.

Illiteracy was Fisher's embarrassing secret. His co-workers knew he had trouble with reading, but he did his job well. When he needed to fill out forms or read instructions, he would find ways to get other people to help him.

A second marriage two years ago prompted Fisher to get help.

Fisher said his wife is educated and well-spoken, and she encouraged him to learn to read. An adult reading class didn't work for him, and Fisher's wife found out about the Literacy Council and called to set up an appointment for him.

The council matched him up with a new volunteer tutor, Noel Sipple of

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for adults who can't read

the Alexandria section of Fairfax County. They meet twice a week, and Fisher has improved his reading to about the fourth-grade level.

"Four or five times, I thought, 'What the deuce! I'll never learn this. I'm getting too old to learn this,'" Fisher recalled. But after the first few difficult months of work, the learning became easier, he said.

Sipple, 43, an English professor at Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale, found Fisher "a very diligent, very motivated student." He appreciates each bit of progress. When she gave Fisher a thank-you note for a Christmas present from him and his wife, "He was so happy because he had read the whole thing, straight through, and he had known every word in it."

Fisher and other students said they stress to their children and grandchildren the importance of education. Fisher said proudly of his 21-year-old son, "He can go into the library and read any book he wants to." Fisher said he hopes to be able to do the same.

"Once I really get over this thing I'm going to help someone else who can't read and write," Fisher added.

Fisher was one of the 167 literacy students the Literacy Council taught last year (along with 157 who studied English as a second language). More than 60 percent worked outside the home; most were men, and nearly all had attended school as children.

The Literacy Council is the area's major volunteer program to teach adults to read, but other services also are available.

Reading specialist Clifford Eichel last year opened a professional reading clinic in McLean — the Northern Virginia Reading Clinic Inc. — to treat children's problems, but he got several calls asking him to work with adults as well. The clinic offers diagnostic testing as well as tutoring.

People interested in tutoring, or learning to read through the Literacy Council may call 256-3444 for more information. The number for Eichel's Northern Virginia Reading Clinic is 556-9180.

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
April 1, 1984 - March 31, 1985

GENERAL INFORMATION	LITERACY PROGRAM	ESOL PROGRAM	TOTAL
General Membership			500
Tutors trained	99	94	193
Presently tutoring	123	110	233
Tutoring at Jails, Churches,ABE Centers	5	20	25
Tutoring ended during year	81	27	108

LITERACY TUTORS 209 ESOL TUTORS 157 ALL TUTORS 366

EDUCATION LEVEL OF TUTORS		
High School degree	16%	9%
College degree	67%	68%
Graduate School or more	17%	23%
SEX OF TUTORS		
Female	91%	85%
Male	9%	15%
EMPLOYED	60%	43%
AGE OF TUTORS		
Under 30	21%	15%
30-45	39%	35%
45-60	25%	30%
60 +	16%	20%
RACE		
White	99%	94%
Black	1%	6%
GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF TUTORS		
Fairfax (includes Falls Church City)	59%	54%
Arlington	31%	30%
Alexandria City	10%	16%

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STUDENT INFORMATION
April 1, 1984 - March 31,1985

GENERAL INFORMATION	LITERACY PROGRAM		ESOL PROGRAM		TOTAL
Placements	106		108		214
Referred to other programs/services	46		69		115
Presently being tutored	133		121		254
Tutoring ended during year	60		52		112
LITERACY TUTORS	193	ESOL TUTORS	173	ALL TUTORS	366
EDUCATION LEVEL OF STUDENTS COMING INTO PROGRAM		EDUCATION LEVEL IN OWN COUNTRY			
0	12%	0-6	45%		
Elementary	27%	7-12	37%		
Jr. High	20%				
High School	40%	College	18%		
College	1%				
Known learning disability	5%				
Mentally retarded	1%				
SEX OF STUDENTS					
Female	54%		77%		
Male	46%		23%		
AGE OF STUDENTS					
Under 30	32%		33%		
30 - 45	49%		38%		
Over 45	16%		20%		
Over 60	3%		9%		
COUNTRY/RACE					
US/White	32%	Indochinese	25%		
US/Black	25%	Central/S.A.	22%		
Oriental	21%	Afganistan	16%		
Hispanic	9%	Korea	12%		
Other	14%	Mid-east	8%		
		Europe	7%		
		Asian (other)	5%		
		Africa	5%		
GEOGRAPHIC AREA					
Fairfax (includes Falls Church)	72%		53%		
Alexandria City	15%		17%		
Arlington	13%		30%		
EMPLOYED WHEN ENTERED PROGRAM	53%		27%		

(continued)

	LITERACY STUDENTS	ESOL STUDENTS	TOTAL
Progress noted:			
Skill Book level			
Book 1	20%	47%	
Book 2	31%	31%	
Book 3	26%	11%	
Book 4	9%	1%	
Book 5	6%	0	
Other materials	8%	9%	

Skill progress noted: (the following information was taken from Tutor Quarterly Reports)

Got jobs	17	12	29
Job advance or better performance	14	6	20
Driver's license	4	5	9
Improved telephone use	9	41	50
Self confidence and self-esteem		(Two hundred reports!)	
New Materials read/wrote:			
Road signs	41	27	68
Ads	30	33	63
Newspaper/magazines	43	12	55
Labels	30	24	54
Work material	35	16	51
Checkbook	23	18	41
Letters	19	19	38
Forms	19	11	30
Menus	20	8	28
Kids' school information	16	11	27

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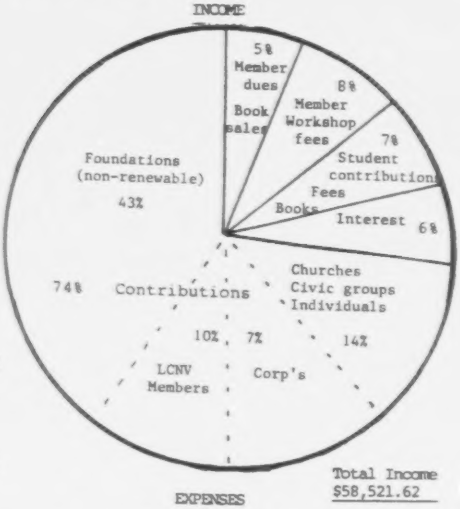
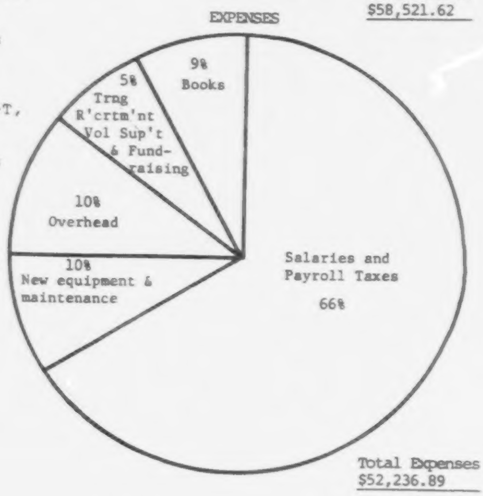
FINANCIAL REPORT
April 1, 1984 - March 31, 1985

DONATED SERVICES

More than 20,000 volunteer hours support the work of the Literacy Council. An estimate of the value of these services and inkind contributions donated to the mission of the Literacy Council follows:

Rent/Utilities donated (at John Calvin Presbyterian Church this last year).	$ 1,600
Tutoring time volunteered (based on 250 tutors $8 per hr.)	$200,000
Staff time volunteered (interviewers, trainers, placement, board, office) writers, fundraisers, bookkeeper) based on 45 volunteers $8 per hr.)	$24,480
Printing at cost (paper donated by A-R-T, McLean)	$1,000
Church space/workshops and inservice donated ($25 per session)	$ 950
Audit (professional service)	$ 600
Estimate of inkind/service donations	$228,630





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3223 S. Utah Street
Arlington, Virginia 22206
December 5th, 1984

Mrs. Sweeney
Executive Dir.
Literacy Council
of Northern Virginia

Dear Mrs. Sweeney:

I would like to tell a success story for your organization and let you decide whether you can use it in any of the Literacy Council Newsletter issues or anything at your disposal.

My father, a 72-year old man, came to the U.S. with practically no English. He spoke Vietnamese and French. He spent most of his time in the house doing nothing, going nowhere. Since he could not converse with people, he was afraid of getting lost; could not ask anybody for direction to get home; could not communicate, therefore, di not dare to leave the house.

We called the Telephone Assurance Program and through that means we learned about the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia. Through your program, my father (no longer living) at age 80 passed his citizenship interview two years before he died. The tutor was Charles Mast, and he did a wonderfully patient job.

We would like to credit your agency's effort and also Charles's assistance and dedication.

Ngoc Dung Trinh

Chairman **Hawkins**. The Chair notices one other individual at the table. Were you accompanying one of the other witnesses?

Mr. **Evans**. This is my wife.

Chairman **Hawkins**. I see. I just didn't want to ignore any other witnesses.

Mr. Goodling.

Mr. **Goodling**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me first ask Woodrow a question, and I ask this as an educator for 23 years.

We often say that an alcoholic can't be helped until they realize they have a problem and they seek help; the same with other drug abusers. My question to you would be: Was there something different, something more, something else, that could have been done while you were in school so that you didn't go through this painful period, or was it a case of having to wait until you saw the need?

Mr. **Evans**. I think schools were entirely different then than they are now. It seems that they have more programs for kids today that they didn't have when I was a child, and they can detect things on children where they didn't when I was a child—for slowness. No child—not all children learn the same. Back when I was a child, they only had one method and one method only. Today they have several different methods, and they have usually a psychiatrist or whatever that will test the children and find out if they have any faults also.

It's just changed since I was a child. I didn't have the benefits then that they have today.

Mr. **Goodling**. May I ask you one other question then along that line. If you can remember back to age 1, 2, 3, 4, and so forth, within the home was there a lot of reading stories to the children, going places, seeing sights, those kind of things?

Mr. **Evans**. No. It wasn't. My parents separated when I was young, and I was switched back and forth and with other relatives. They seemed to have an educational problem also, and I was just left alone. I was not helped, and up to the point that I thought I couldn't be helped. I thought I couldn't read at all.

Then my wife suggested for me to join this adult program, and I had doubt when I first joined. But after joining, I started finding out things that I never did when I was going to school, to begin with. For instance, I never was taught the sounds of letters or vowels. I knew nothing about it. So if you can put a word in front of me, it was impossible for me to read it.

I'm finding out more things than I've ever found out from when I used to go to school from the difference, the changes from when I was a child, to what's going on today in schools. Now I know that I can read, and how far I'm going to go, I don't know. The sky's the limit. I just know I'm going to have something I always wanted.

Mr. **Goodling**. I want to congratulate you for your efforts, and the sky is the limit. I hope you get to the sky.

Mr. **Evans**. Thank you.

Mr. **Goodling**. Renee, I'll turn to you next. I probably shouldn't say this in public. I'm in my office usually from 5:30 or 6 in the morning until midnight, sometimes, if I fall asleep, straight through; and I spend a lot of time with you. You make my life much easier while I'm in that office setting.

I'd have two questions that I'd like to ask you. Were there planning sessions for the volunteers? In other words, was there someone in charge, and was there some program the volunteers were given?

Ms. POUSSAINT. Yes. Operation Rescue does provide for that. Each school has a coordinator who is a D.C. staff person who is there all the time and makes sure that you are matched with an appropriate student in terms of the kinds of things that you have to offer and the kinds of needs the student has.

Also, Operation Rescue provides for periodic training sessions to help tutors learn how to, in fact, tutor, and make sure that they're using the most effective methods and that they understand what's available to them.

So you can avail yourself of that periodically, as you go along.

Mr. GOODLING. The other question I would ask: Was there a reading readiness program in that home before the child came to school?

Ms. POUSSAINT. It varied with the children. I would say, for the most part, each of the children that I've tutored came from a home where he or she was loved, but most of them came from homes where the parents were so caught up in the daily struggle of trying to earn a living that they really didn't have a lot of time to work on their children's reading problems, or even necessarily to be that aware of where they were, in terms of those problems.

I remember the first young boy that I tutored. We had a terrible time trying to get his mother to come to school to talk to us about some of his difficulties. And as it turned out later on, after a full semester had gone by, it appeared that she also had some reading problems and was embarrassed to come in, and could not in fact read much of the information that came home about her son.

That is still a process that's being worked out, because she's not gotten beyond being embarrassed about that, and doesn't know how to deal with it and doesn't feel confident enough to avail herself of any of the adult literacy programs.

So the attention now is on her child and trying to make sure that that cycle isn't repeated with him.

Mr. GOODLING. So many times we take from this society, and we don't give back. Thank you for your volunteer efforts.

Ms. POUSSAINT. Thank you.

Mr. GOODLING. Dr. McCune, you said you don't use any of your adult education money for any of the students who are at elementary, secondary levels.

Mr. MCCUNE. Who are secondary. Yes. We have State money that we use for that, but we reserve our Federal funds for those most in need. I might add that, through the flexibility of the Adult Education Act, we fund the community based organizations, we fund institutions. For instance, the department of corrections and State hospitals—we have programs in those facilities. We fund community colleges, and that is a separate administrative system, as well as a large number of public school programs also.

So we are reaching down into the communities with organized trained programs that are in the neighborhoods, as Mr. Kozol commented. That has been our point of view also, to get that education as close to the people as possible.

Mr. GOODLING. The reason I'm pursuing that: It really fits into part of your testimony, Mr. Kozol's and Mrs. Savage's, because I would probably ask all the same. As Mr. Kozol mentioned, I'm trying to come up with some program that will tie the adult and the child together so that we can really solve this problem. It seems to me, we have to solve from both ends at the same time.

When Mrs. Savage talks about the other, sometimes the other probably could be the parent, as a matter of fact, if we tie the two together and work with both the parent and child at the same time. This is nothing brilliant, you know, from off the top of my head. I had an early childhood education director who took our title I money and did just that, went out in the homes and worked with the parent at the same time we were working with preschool child.

So I was just wondering whether you are trying that in your State, trying to tie the two together, working with the parent and the child at the same time?

Mr. McCUNE. Let me be more specific with that particular aspect because of your interest. You might find this somewhat surprising. In California, as I mentioned, we have over 1.5 million students in our adult education programs operated by high school and unified school districts, the public schools.

There are 10 authorized areas in our legislation for which we can utilize part of the $192 million that I have allocated for the purposes of that program. One of those areas is parent education. Now we do not spend our Federal moneys in the parent education category. We spend our State moneys, and that is a priority that we have had.

The kind of help that you're talking about, which is more oriented to parent/child responsibilities and procedures, approaches, understanding, comes into those classes, which is about 6 percent of our total program. So it's a fairly sizable effort.

That's over and above and beyond where we're trying to work with illiterate parents in actually teaching them literacy skills and helping them develop it.

The other response that I'd like to give to that particular question is the approach that we have taken in California of working on a competency base; and those competencies are not dictated by those of us at the state level, but are determined by those in the local communities and down where they belong.

What are sometimes referred to as life skills, which covers a wide range of things; but certainly parenting is one of those life skills. We use as content various things that are of immediate interest to a parent. If I could give just one example which may be the easiest one to give:

Supposing a mother is out in the yard and her young child falls out of a tree and breaks his arm. That does happen with some regularity, I am told. That parent needs to know how to get emergency aid right now. They need to know principles of first aid. They need to know perhaps how to use the telephone.

All of those things are appropriate content matter for what we call a competency based instructional approach in which we deal with the things that concern people in their daily lives on an immediate basis; and we teach the skills of reading, writing and computation, as they relate to something that the parent needs.

How do you look up in a phone book and find out what number you dial? 911 or whatever. What do you say when the phone is answered? Those are very real things that are taken up in our ABE classrooms in the neighborhood.

Parenting is another one of those things that would go.

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you. I'm sure my time has run out. Let me just say to Mr. Kozol, I'm sorry that I'm not going to be at your talk in my district. I understand you're going to be in Pennsylvania, and I would love to be there. I think they already have me scheduled in two other counties at the same time.

You will be able to help me dramatically by being there, because my hope is to make the 19th District the most literate district in the United States; but it's going to take a lot of doing, getting the educators, the parents, the business community and all working together. So you can sow a little seed.

Having said that, let me just make a response to one thing you did say. You talked about nostalgic leaders. In my lifetime, and I've been around a long time, there have only been two leaders in the White House that I can remember that really focused the attention of public education, as far as the public is concerned.

They have done it in different ways. Lyndon Johnson with programs that he spoke of; and that nostalgic leader that I imagine you were referring to who is there at the present time. Perhaps more than anybody, President Reagan has used his pulpit to tell the American people that education is important, and that we've been taking it for granted a long, long time. It seems to me now it's the responsibility of the educators, the legislators, the local officials, to really take the ball and run with it, rather than feel that we're being punished because things haven't gone as well as somebody thought they should have.

I thought I would have to make that statement, sitting on this side of the aisle.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HAWKINS. Thank you. Mr. Williams.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Thank you. And I add my thanks, along with my colleagues, to each of you for your good counsel today. Those of you who have made specific recommendations have been particularly helpful to us, and we're grateful.

I want to—a particular note to my friend Jonathan Kozol. Jonathan, it's nice to see you again. Since we last had dinner and discussed this matter, we've continued to storm the problem, including trying to examine the definition of illiteracy in America and to plumb its depth and extent. The more we find, the more we realize the enormous, human and dollar costs to this nation of illiteracy.

As you were kind enough to mention in your testimony, Jonathan, we are developing what we hope will be workable initiatives, legislative initiatives; and that brings me to a question of some of you. We find a dilemma. We are not in the political era of active Federalism in America today, and yet the wave is cresting on this problem, and it seems to many of us that it requires a Federal initiative which would include, of course, as it always has, cooperation with State and local and private—State and local government and the private sector of our economy, but certainly a Federal initiative.

So our dilemma is: How do we get a new aggressive Federal initiative through this Congress and across the President's desk with his signature? And it's a real dilemma. I'm not being partisan about it. The fact is, the majority of votes on either side of the aisle aren't there for the creation of a significant Federal initiative to attack literacy. You can't get it through the House, and you can't get it through the Senate, in my judgment, despite the breadth of the problem.

So let me ask—let me ask first, you, Dr. McCune. What is the appropriate Federal role in trying to develop initiatives to assist the local folks with this problem?

Mr. McCUNE. I've long considered that, and I can deal from a more theoretical position, that I think the primary role of the Federal government should be to set a national policy. I don't think we have a national policy, however you want to define that, right now which addresses the concept of literacy.

I, too, was in the White House when the initiatives were announced, the last set of initiatives; found them to be primarily private sector in focus. Again—I hate to keep repeating. I'm a practical man. I have to be. We can talk about prevention of illiteracy. I have responsibility for intervention. We have a problem. We've got to find some way to respond to it, in a scope, a program, that we can.

I think the Federal role for the short term has got to find within itself the fortitude to provide adequate funding for the act that they have put in place which is perfectly appropriate to carry out that portion of the Federal role.

It has the flexibility of funding local providers of a wide variety, both profit and nonprofit, at this point. It has those capacities in the section 309 to provide just a limited amount of funding that could offer some leadership in helping these things to go.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Dr. McCune, let me interrupt to ask you this: If the acts that are currently in statute are workable but there simply isn't enough Federal money——

Mr. McCUNE. To go around.

Mr. WILLIAMS [continuing]. To allow each State to adequately take the initiative, why don't the States and the localities, seeing the need and understanding the way to attack the problem which is in the Federal statutes, simply do it on your own? Why don't you increase property taxes out in California and do it on your own? We can't get you anymore money from here, but the problem is still there.

Mr. McCUNE. We're putting $192 million into our adult education programs now, strictly at the public school level, to say nothing of community colleges and others that are doing that. I think that is responding. I think the size of the problem is such that it warrants and merits—it has to take a national perspective.

I'm not in a position to say what every State is doing, but I certainly, with some degree of pride, will point to California and the amount of resources that they're pouring into this thing. And they're saying, help. The fact—We get, I'm told by the Immigration Service, 40 percent of all immigration that comes into this country.

That has nothing to do with our failure of our public school systems, as we've heard here today. Forty out of every 100 people that come into this country on an immigrant basis—and I don't think that includes the illegals—end up in California eventually.

That is a burden that's placed on our State that's incredible. I just have to tell you. And we're no longer with the ESL population that is literate in their own language and simply looking for the English language skills so that they can put their knowledges to use in our country. We're talking about people that don't even have an alphabet or a written language, that are totally illiterate in their own language.

We have those problems at the State level, and they are taking our resources, because we have a commitment to those folks. We can't do it by ourselves.

Mr. **WILLIAMS**. I understand. Mr. Kozol, Jonathan, what is the appropriate Federal role? Given the political realities, now.

Mr. **KOZOL**. Well, I try to be realistic, and it's clear that—the plea I made in my book for a multibillion dollar Federal investment, even though I phrased it in very hardnosed terms, as a good dollar bargain, in terms of saving money, for example, in the case of a student like Steven, I still know that's not going to fly this year in Washington. Perhaps not next year either.

What's possible now? Well, first of all, I agree from what I know in California that the Adult Basic Education Program is very impressive. You said 650,000 people you're reaching. Still—I mean, we know there are millions unreached, whether it's 3 million or 5 million. It's just scratching the surface, and that's probably a lot more State money than most States put in. I think it's quite a spectacular sum.

The question is, What about raising property taxes? Why doesn't a local school board say, well, it's our problem, let's deal with it? I don't see how that can be done. Just take my own hometown of Boston. Good Lord, they laid off a fifth of the teaching force in the Boston public schools since 1980. Where are they going to find the money to do that? The property tax base in Boston is diminished greatly by the flight of middle-class people to the suburbs.

In Massachusetts the discrepancy between per pupil allocation in public schooling ranges from a high $6,000 a year in the wealthiest suburbs to $1,500 a year in the poorest school district; and it's the poorest school districts which also probably have the highest number of illiterates.

So I suppose this is one year, the first time in my life when I ever felt fortunate not to be in Congress, because I don't have to be realistic in the painful way that you must. So I don't see any alternative to some, even modest, amount of Federal money. Perhaps it can be found in existing programs. Perhaps it can be shifted from one program to another. I see no way to—I see no way that we're going to get it exclusively from the private sector, from all the church groups that do volunteer money, from the States and cities.

The point is, I wholly agree with the idea of Federal, State, local, private sector, volunteer partnership. I agree. The thing is, the volunteers have been great partners. The State of California is a great partner. The city of El Paso is a great partner. B. Dalton Bookseller's a great partner. It's the Government which has been—the Federal Government, which is a bad partner right now.

I don't mean, by the way—Mr. Goodling, I was not—I did not mean the President was not a good—was not throwing good passes. I just felt that Mr. Bennett was having trouble catching them. I would not say that of the President.

Congressman Williams, I feel frustrated because I've spent the past week trying to figure out what could be done without a cent of money. And I can't think of much, but I can say this: I think Dr. McCune is right, and I think Mrs. Savage is right. A small investment of money can bring a big return in all sorts of decency which exists in America.

There's a tendency in Washington to say, well, is it the Federal dollar or is it local goodwill? Well, in fact, you can't mobilize local goodwill with some dollars. I've spent twenty years organizing volunteers, and I've probably spent half of those 10 years trying to find the money to pay for the five or six staff people who could train the volunteers without that initial seed money we can't do it.

Is it conceivable that there might be Federal money at least to set up a couple dozen demonstration projects along the lines of your proposals and those of Mr. Goodling?

Mr. **Williams**. Mrs. Savage?

Ms. **Savage**. We are doing—we're self-generated, our organization is; and we're doing little things. We could do more, but Mr. Kozol makes a very good point. We can get more students, many more students, and we can get more tutors; but it takes staff people and organization and coordination within the group. We are already doing little things.

We started a small pilot program in Alexandria to go into a housing project and tutor the people in that project to learn to tutor their children. We train the tutors so they can help themselves and help their children and other people within that housing project.

We also already send people—our tutors go into jails and tutor individuals in small groups. Our tutors also work with adult basic education people. We do all the little things we can, and we have two wonderful human resources in our area. We have tutors available and students available, but it still takes a lot of doing to pull all that together. And the doing is money.

I'd like to say thank you. One of the best things that the government is doing for us is giving us this kind of a forum today.

Mr. **Williams**. Thank you. Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would just note that I understand Mrs. Savage, why you refer to those as the little things, but we've learned through the years in America that progress in education is geometric; and when one tutor teaches one parent who teaches one child, the explosion of good in this country is far from little.

Ms. **Savage**. And what's wrong with a little bit of goodness. Right?

Mr. **Williams**. Absolutely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Before calling on Senator Pell to uphold the Senate contingent of this joint hearing committee, may I request unanimous consent that a statement by Senator Dodd be included in the record at this point. Without objection, it is so ordered. Also, I would like to convey the regrets of Senator Kennedy, who is attending a funeral service and cannot be here today. He wanted to indicate his interest and concern and his regrets at not being able to attend the hearing today.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Christopher J. Dodd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Mr. Chairman, this morning's hearing is to focus on one of America's most difficult problems—illiteracy. The illiteracy problem is not new in America, but it remains misunderstood and neglected—a closet social problem. I applaud the hearings this morning because they will shed light on this intractable issue. Understanding the causes and magnitude of the illiteracy dilemma is the first step in rectifying the problem.

While I am pleased that Connecticut illiteracy rates are not the highest in the Nation, our State is nonetheless beset by serious problems, particularly with regard to the availability of services for illiterate people. Currently, publicly supported programs serve some 40,000 Connecticut illiterates. This sounds like a sizable number until it is contrasted with the estimated 600,000 illiterates who need services. This means that for every served person, 15 more are not receiving attention. Although private and volunteer sectors have attempted to fill the gap, they too serve only a small fraction of the population in need.

This lack of services has become particularly worrisome as drop-out rates among Connecticut's urban high school populations escalate. Businessmen and corporate leaders are deeply concerned. They fear that avoidance of the illiteracy issue will corrode an already increasingly incompetent workforce. To this end, some larger corporations—American Can and Pratt Whitney for example—have made strong commitments to alleviating illiteracy.

Unfortunately, though, small companies, of which Connecticut has many, simply do not have the resources for training, so hundreds of illiterates never make it through the work-place door, thereby adding to Connecticut's growing underclass. This lack of an adequate workforce may well become a disincentive to corporations considering relocating in Connecticut, in spite of a favorable corporate tax structure in the State.

Lest we concentrate on illiteracy as solely an economic problem, we can't forget that illiteracy is an intensely personal problem, one that keeps ⅓ of the Nation's population from leading fully productive lives. Hiding behind the cloak of illiteracy, parents can not guide their children's academics nor can they read prescription dosages or nutrition contents of food being purchased. Illiterates' daily lives are filled with frustration, confusion and shame. To avoid embarrassment, illiterates mask their handicap, many for years. Too often, overwhelmed by daily life, illiterates turn inward, or worse, to the underworld of drugs, crime, prison. Fully, 25 percent of our Nation's prison population are illiterate.

But the most striking consequence of illiteracy is that it sullies the very integrity of American democracy. When one-third of the Nation is virtually excluded from participating in the democratic process because they can not read well enough to vote, the basic principles of this Nation are in question. Can we be two-thirds a democracy?

The negative consequences of illiteracy are as threatening to our fundamental way of life as they are pervasive. While scholars debate definitions, and statisticians assess incidence, we know that existing programs don't begin to meet the populations' needs: We know that as commissions ponder, as legislation lingers, illiteracy corrodes.

Swift, yet wise, action is badly needed. The focus must be on preventive approaches, particularly approaches that deal with young children before they are tainted by failure, approaches that intervene to stop the illiteracy cycle. I hope these hearings will be a precursor to study and action, to prevention and treatment, to eradicating this ubiquitous social problem.

Chairman **HAWKINS**. Senator Pell, we're very delighted to have you join us.

Mr. **GOODLING**. Could I have Senator Stafford, included in that.

Chairman **Hawkins**. And Senator Stafford. Without objection, Senator Stafford's regrets, as well as a statement which he may wish to have included in the record, will be granted.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Robert T. Stafford follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT T. STAFFORD, A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

Today the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities joins the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education for probably the last in a series of hearings on the problem of illiteracy in our country. It has been a pleasure to work with Chairman Hawkins in such a relaxed atmosphere, and I commend him on his leadership in this area.

The Subcommittee has been pleased with the results of the last hearings. We have heard from a variety of distinguished witnesses. Their testimonies, put together with the testimonies, heard today, will bring us closer to understanding the illiteracy problem in our country at present.

We are pleased to have an excellent panel of witnesses coming from a variety of perspectives. I would first like to welcome Congressman Tallon and commend him for his interest in this area. We also welcome Mr. Woodrow Evans, an adult education student, the anchorwoman for WJLA-TV, Renee Pouissant, Mr. Donald McCune who is the director of adult, alternative, and continuation education for the California State Department of Education, and Mr. Jonathan Kozol, author of "Illiterate America." I would especially like to welcome Mrs. Sidney Savage who is the president of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia. The subcommittee looks forward to hearing all of your testimonies.

Chairman **Hawkins**. Senator Pell.

Mr. **Pell**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I surely commend both you and Chairman Stafford for holding these very significant hearings on the problems of illiteracy. I regret, too, that other Senate duties have kept me from being at this joint hearing as much as I would have liked. And I share the deep concern of my colleagues over the monumental human and economic costs resulting from our present dreadful illiteracy rate.

In economic terms, this Nation is greatly shortchanged simply by the loss of productivity and generated taxes when 26 million of its citizens can't read. In human terms, the inability to read forces an individual into perilous battles, with prescription labels, poison warnings, and street signs.

To my mind, we can't afford not to take action on this problem. The economic and social price incurred by illiteracy is much too severe. Several months ago, some colleagues of mine in the Senate, including Senators Stafford, Dodd, and Kennedy, announced the introduction of the Dropout Prevention and Re-Entry Act, legislation which Congressman Hayes has introduced in the House.

Because one of the major reasons for functional illiteracy is dropping out of school, it's my belief that the passage of this legislation could be a vital step in addressing this issue. I think these hearings will help focus on that point, and in that regard I would like to ask particularly Mr. Kozol, whose works I have had a chance to peruse in the past, whether he believes that dropping out of school contributes to our illiteracy rate, or is it more often the case that the inability to read pushes the student out of the high school. Which is the answer, do you think?

Mr. **Kozol**. Well, I'm sure both are true to some degree; but my suspicion is your latter hunch is the operative one. It seems to me that a student—just from my own experience, a couple of years ago

I went back and taught at South Boston High School one semester, so that I would remember what I'm talking about.

It seems to me the students who drop out are those most likely to be in serious reading problems and, therefore, already suffering a sense of boredom or fear or humiliation. Just as a footnote to that question, Senator Pell, it seems to me there's been a recent focus in the past year or two on stiffening up standards in high schools. The code words have been excellence and standards, tougher tests, competency tests to graduate high school.

Having taught both high school and at the college level, and youngsters in third and fourth grade, I can't help feeling that the recent tendency to stiffen high school requirements is relatively empty and meaningless. It has one result. We can be tough, but what does the toughness mean? It just means more people will fail the test, and they will either drop out or they will get a meaningless piece of paper.

The real thing, it seems to me, is what do you do with those children from the time they are 3 or 4 years old until the time they leave elementary school. I even feel that after fourth grade, you can almost see the warning signs of failure. That's why I keep going back to those early years, and it's an irony that, after I finished a book on illiterate adults, I find I'm drawn back again to those 4-year-olds.

Mr. PELL. What's that old Jesuit proverb? Give me—you remember it?

Mr. KOZOL. Yes.

Mr. PELL. I can't quite recall it.

Mr. KOZOL. Give me a fish—is that——

Mr. PELL. No, no. Give me a child before 7, and we will educate him from—I can't remember—which one of you believes that our illiteracy rate or—to phrase it better: Do you any of you know the statistics with regard to how our illiteracy rate compares with other technologically industrialized nations?

Mr. KOZOL. The only recent figures I have—and I'm taking this on faith from researchers at ABC news and ABC television, but I've checked out the source. The United Nations in the past year placed the United States in terms of male literacy at 18th in the world; female, a little better; average, about 15th. Fifteenth out of the member nations of the U.N. Among the top five were Australia, Finland, the Netherlands, Luxumbourg, and the Soviet Union.

I see that not as a reason to praise the Soviet Union, but a reason to be alarmed for our own sake.

Mr. PELL. It's a fact of life. Incidentally, my excellent staff gave me the phrase I was groping for before. It's: "Give us a child before the age of seven, and he's ours for life." I think that's what you're saying. If you can make him literate before he's at that age, approximately, you will have an effect on him throughout his life.

Now is there any comparison between illiteracy in urban and rural areas, or is it roughly the same?

Mr. MCCUNE. I'm not sure if we have any really definitive information on that. It's being developed in our State. Our assembly office of research has just completed a study of the attrition rate of the class of 1983, and I'm not real sure that they have broken that out into urban and rural.

The comments that I have heard is that we will find in urban centers a higher percentage of problems. We do know that the dropout rates or the attrition rates—let me be careful of my definitions—that the attrition rates are higher in the inner-city schools where there are a series of other socioeconomic problems that impact upon that student.

That's the best information that I can have, is the fact that we do have those figures for the various schools, and we see the higher rates on the inner cities.

Mr. PELL. Attrition means when one is forced out. Dropout means when one drops out voluntarily. Is that the difference?

Mr. McCUNE. I'm sorry. Would you repeat that?

Mr. PELL. What's the difference between attrition and dropout?

Mr. McCUNE. Well, that's why I was being so careful. What we call attrition is, for example, we know exactly how many students were enrolled as freshmen in 1979. We know exactly how many people completed their senior year in 1983. The difference is attrition.

There are many, many kinds of reasons why that attrition is there that may be other than people dropping out of school. We have people who die. I'm not saying that's very large, but that's an example of the kind of thing. We have people—there is a movement in and out of the State that has to be accounted for, and there have been some changes in those years in the patterns; but primarily we're looking at unwed mothers and pregnancies, where people drop out of school and don't return.

We're trying to identify and track what those dropout—where those dropout people are going and why they're leaving.

Mr. PELL. I thank you, and again thank the chairman very much indeed for running these joint hearings.

Chairman HAWKINS. Well, thank you, Senator. May I indicate to the witnesses, there is always a certain timidity on the part of everyone who seems to say that the solution cannot be discussed because of the current mood of Congress or because the majority of the Members will not support a particular program because of the funding concept.

I think, if we get into that position, we may as well leave these hearings and not even discuss the subject. So I would certainly suggest that we need to be talking about what should be done and not what we think is doable, because everybody begins talking with a certain degree of reservation and timidity, and the idea is built up, therefore, that we don't get any good ideas or we don't talk about what should be done.

It's pretty obvious we're spending well over $200 billion on the residual costs of illiteracy, and I think we've got to begin talking in terms of how we can invest some of that money more wisely and more economically, looking at it strictly from an economic point of view.

We always have Members, obviously, who say, well, we can't do this or we can't do that, because of the budget situation. Well, the fact is that a large amount of that budget deficit is due to illiteracy and to the problem it inflicts us with.

I just wanted to make that statement, because I didn't want anyone to think that we've gone to the trouble of joining these two committees in the Congress together merely to come out with a pessimistic conclusion that all that we have said and all the testimony we have gathered doesn't mean too much, because this is not the time to do anything about illiteracy.

Dr. Kozol, I would like to ask you something which stuck out in the reading of your recent book, "Illiterate America." If I can quote it, and I hope that you will correct me if I don't quote it correctly, I think you said that illiteracy is the logical consequence of the kinds of schools we operate. If I have quoted it correctly or nearly correctly, could you amplify on that, because it tends to indicate that there is something that we are doing in the school system today. While I recognize the very fine work of volunteers such as Ms. Poussaint volunteering to help the Donnell's and the fine work done, certainly, in the literacy council, the fact remains that we have a school system to which we compel individuals to go, and we are beginning to start at the age of 3 and 4 now.

If that system is failing, then we can have all of the fine volunteers such as Renee Poussaint around, and we're not going to reach enough individuals to make a real substantial difference, since illiteracy is not only high but it's increasing.

Would you amplify on that statement, because it tends to say that there is something we're not doing right in the public school system; and if we are actually failing, it seems to me, that's one place that we can begin to demand that children be taught. We know that any child can be taught. That's the place to insist that they be taught, that they be taught early, and that they not be passed from one grade to another unless they are taught.

Mr. KOZOL. Well, Congressman Hawkins and Senator Pell, this is a good note to—for me at least to end my thoughts. I'm especially glad to be able to share this with both of you, who have been in different ways closely identified with some of the best education changes we've had in this country, in my adult life.

There's a tendency—When I say it's not by accident, it has to do with the schools, it's a tendency for people to scapegoat the teachers and say, well, it's their fault. Teachers seem to be everybody's scapegoat the past couple of years.

I don't really mean teachers. Teachers are the victims as much as the kids. It does have to do with the way teachers are treated and the types of people we entice to be teachers, or more accurately, the reasons we don't entice those we would like to be teachers to stay as teachers.

Let me give an example from my own experience. When I was teaching fifth grade after fourth grade in Boston where I was not liked very much by the school board, to be quite honest, where I was fired for bringing in subversive material, Robert Frost and Langston Hughes, I was hired by a rich school system, suburban Newton, MA, on the basis of my dismissal from Boston. It's a very good way to get a better job.

I noticed really in both systems, but more in the city, the following: First of all, teachers got—pay was so ludicrous, and still is, that anybody like myself who had gone to a liberal arts college had to face the constant embarrassment of running into classmates who would look at you as though you were—you know, they would refer to you the same way they would refer to people who were in hospitals for extended periods of time, sort of—it's sort of an odd phase he must be going through.

So it was not just the low pay. It was the total lack of esteem attached to the profession. To this day, people ask me what I'm going to do when I grow up. They say, this isn't a real thing. In a very fine suburban school of Newton, a principal once said to me something which I think is the clearest answer to your question. She liked what I was doing, and she said to me this. She said, Jonathan, you're doing a good job. That's because I was fortunate. She only came to class on the right days. Then she said, you don't want to spend the rest of your life with fifth grade children; why don't you take some courses. You could be an administrator someday, like me.

It suddenly occurred to me that teaching in the United States the way it's structured today is one of the few careers, perhaps the only profession, in which the only reward for being any good at what you do is being denied the chance to do it ever again.

If you're a good doctor, you can look forward to 40 years of being a better doctor. Same, I assume, in Congress. But if you're a good teacher or if people think you are, the only reward is to become a principal, a superintendent, or perhaps someone who goes and writes books about teachers and educational problems.

Now I think that we've got to alter the reward structure in the teaching profession, and have to put a high priority on the teaching that counts most in a democracy, which is the teaching that takes place in ordinary public schools, in poor neighborhoods as well as wealthy, for the youngest children.

I've taught 3d grade, 4th grade, 5th grade, 12th grade, and I spent 1 year slumming teaching in New Haven at Yale University. That was the easiest year of my life for the best pay, and the toughest with the worst pay was teaching fourth graders.

I know you can't always get what you—I hear this all the time in Washington. You can't be guaranteed of getting what you pay for. So they say why throw money at it. But it sure—it's sure as heck that we never get what we don't pay for. I think that's one area. We'd get good rewards if we paid for it properly.

As a footnote to that, I find it frightening to open the paper every few days and read that another decent program which did make some good impact in the past 15 years, such as title I or Head Start, appears to be in peril. I don't mean this week, but every season for the past few years it appears that Congress is defending these programs, always on the defensive against a determined attack to reduce programs which seem to me to be the essence of enlightened Democratic policy. And those are the best things that I've seen in my lifetime.

There's nothing maudlin or sentimental about a program like Head Start. That's one of the best acts in a democracy. I might say the recent NAEP study which came out 2 weeks ago, National Assessment Study, showed excellent scores for 17-year-olds. The one newspaper, USA Today, appeared to attribute this to toughened standards in the past 24 months. I doubt it had anything to do with that. I don't think that all those high school kids in the past 24 months did this in response to statements from the White House.

I think that the reason they scored well is because they went to school. They entered school in 1972, 1973 when Head Start and title I and good programs like that were mushrooming; and the 9-year-olds who entered school in the past 5 years showed the lowest scores.

I'm grateful that you're in Congress to resist that trend.

Chairman Hawkins. Thank you. Ms. Poussaint, what can we do to get more volunteers? Have you any idea?

Ms. Poussaint. One of the basic things, I think, is certainly publicizing it as much as you possibly can. Also, I think that there needs to be more development of volunteer programs that allow people to volunteer during out of school hours.

The program that I'm involved in really means that they're dependent on people either who do not work or who work at night, or retirees, college students, and so forth. I think that there has to be, again, more neighborhood programs set up in hours that are convenient to people who, in fact, work for a living, but have some time that they would like to give on their own.

That means a lot of coordination, and it also means, unfortunately, money, which is the subject that we're saying we have very little of here.

Chairman Hawkins. Well, thank you.

Dr. McCune, several of your questions—sorry. I had several questions for you, but I see there's a vote pending in the House. I'll have another opportunity to reach you when we both return home.

Mr. McCune. I'm sure.

Chairman Hawkins. Again, the committee would like to thank the witnesses for the very excellent testimony today. I think you have contributed greatly to the work of the committee. We seem now to be getting down to the basics, and I think the views that have been expressed by all of you. Mr. Woodrow Evans, I think it does take a certain amount of courage to come before a committee and to show how you've overcome an earlier frailty, but we certainly appreciate that. I think that is what it's all about.

All of the witnesses, I think, have done an excellent job, for which we're deeply thankful. Thank you.

That concludes the hearing today.

[Whereupon, at 12:08 p.m., the joint committee was adjourned.]

[Additional material submitted for the record follows:]

Prepared Statement of Peter A. Waite, Executive Director, Laubach Literacy Action

Now is the time for the Congress of the United States to boldly address the issue of illiteracy in America. The extent of the problem is well-documented: 27 million functionally illiterate adults in a country that prides itself on providing equal opportunity for all. What does this number mean? It means 20% of the adults in the United States can not read well enough to read a newspaper, understand the instructions on a bottle of medicine, fill out a job application or a social security form, decipher a lease or a phone bill, or understand and exercise their rights as citizens. Their illiteracy is a legacy of dependence and exclusion; dependence on friends and family and government to guide them through the daily pitfalls that await the nonreader, and exclusion from the opportunity to fully participate in the economic, cultural, and political life of this nation.

To an individual, illiteracy is a tremendous handicap; one that breeds frustration, anger, apathy, and alienation. To the nation, illiteracy poses a staggering burden. In an increasingly complex society, clear communication is fundamental to success in most jobs. Yet more and more employers are finding that their employees and job applicants do not have the basic skills they need. Employers can not depend on young adults just entering the job market; according to the National Commission on Excellence in Education, nearly 40% of the 17-year-olds can not draw inferences from reading, and two-thirds can not solve mathematics problems.

This nation prides itself on being founded on the principles of pluralism and participatory democracy. Yet the illiteracy of our citizens threatens our heritage. If knowledge is power, then illiteracy is disenfranchisement. Few who have encountered the barriers to participation in society caused by illiteracy have access to the information and ideas that are prerequisites to making wise choices about our nation's future. Some sixty percent of eligible voters don't go to the polls. How many of them can't read the ballot? How many don't feel invested in the political process because they can't read a newspaper or because their lack or reading skills have left them frozen out of opportunities enjoyed by other Americans? Illiteracy threatens democracy because democracy depends upon participation, and participation depends on an informed electorate.

Adult illiteracy is a massive problem. It will get worse. Each year the pool of adult non-readers is joined by over a million high school dropouts, plus countless others who have slipped through our public schools without the basic skills they need. A solution to illiteracy must be comprehensive. We can not afford to wait until our children become adults to teach them to read. But neither can we ignore the needs of adults or the very important role they play in fostering basic skills development among their children. Most educators agree that reading is most easily learned at a very early age. Studies show that children who are read bedtime stories by their parents make significantly more progress when they reach school age than children who are not. Does that mean that literacy is "the parents' responsibility"? In part, yes. But what about the children whose parents can't read to them? Will they be tomorrow's non-readers? Or will we commit ourselves to eliminating illiteracy among adults as well as children?

What can be done? The Librarian of Congress, in his report entitled "Books in Our Future," said:

"It would be comforting to think that we could simply pass laws against illiteracy and aliteracy, but they cannot be legislated away. Their menace and their magitude come from the fact that they are everywhere—among young and old, poor and rich, in cities and small towns and rural areas. As the problem is everywhere, so the solutions are everywhere. We all have the responsibility and the power—in our homes, schools, libraries, churches, civic and fraternal organizations, businesses, labor unions—to do something about it. Wise legislation and public funds can help, but we need a thousand efforts by every one of us and in every one of our institutions. . . ."

This spirit of personal responsibility for our fellow citizens is embodied in the 100,000 or more tutors and other volunteers working to help their friends, neighbors and, often complete strangers to learn to read and write. Laubach Literacy Action, Literacy Volunteers of America, and Lutheran Church Women's Volunteer Reading Aides are among the volunteer groups which are contributing to the effort. And they are doing a good job. Last year, some 75,000 adults recieved one-to-one tutoring and small group instruction from these dedicated volunteers. But it is not enough. Volunteers alone serve less than 40% of the adult non-readers in the United States. While volunteers alone can not make America a literate society, their impact can be greatly expanded.

Congress can assist this effort in two ways. First, it can build on the success of existing volunteer programs teaching adult non-readers. Second, it can foster the development of new programs and provide assistance in the coordination and management of programs.

1. EXISTING PROGRAMS

a. *Adult Basic Education.* Adult Basic Education programs are the foundation of adult education in the United States, and should be the first place for non-readers to go for help. In order for this to occur, ABE programs should be expanded and provided with more funds for basic skills instruction so that those adults most needing reading and writing skills can obtain assistance. Funding for ABE programs should be provided with the flexibility to ensure that a diversity of programs are available, including institutional, community based, and volunteer efforts.

b. *VISTA.* A survey conducted by Friends of VISTA in April, 1985, indicated that VISTA volunteers have been instrumental in expanding 95 literacy projects in the United States. As of July, 1985, 573 VISTA volunteers were working in literacy programs in forty states. This represents nearly 25% of all VISTA volunteers in the country. As an example of the success of the program, Operation Mainstream, a non-profit literacy group in New Orleans affiliated with Laubach Literacy Action, has 23 VISTA volunteers working in 45 locations. They are responsible for recruiting students and tutors and establishing local literacy groups. To date, they have recruited more than 400 new tutors, and raised the number of students from 300 to 700. VISTA is a good program which could significantly increase participation in volunteer literacy groups. Congress should provide VISTA with the necessary resources to expand the number of its volunteers working in literacy.

c. *Libraries.* Through the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), Congress has mandated up to $5 million a year in public library literacy programs. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 334 library literacy projects have received funding for literacy programs or materials under LSCA, and 26 states currently have LSCA-funded literacy projects. California has a model program involving 27 public libraries working with local literacy groups, and Illinois and Oklahoma have recently begun similar statewide projects. Libraries are uniquely situated to contribute to the literacy effort. Each of the over 5,000 public libraries in the United States could be providing volunteers and materials to adult non-readers if this program's funding were significantly increased.

d. *RSVP.* The Retired Senior Volunteer Program is recruiting older Americans to work with literacy students. Laubach Literacy Action recently began a program to assist RSVP in this effort. Our retired people are special resources whose generosity, time, and experience should be used to their fullest. Congress should provide more funding for this program.

e. *College Work-Study.* College students, especially those studying for a teaching career, are also in a unique position to expand our literacy effort. Currently, while college work-study students may work in literacy projects, there is no requirement that any of the funds be used this way. Congress should designate that a percentage of College Work-Study dollars be used to enable students to work specifically in volunteer literacy programs, and it should provide incentives to colleges to encourage students to do so. Not only would adult literacy benefit, but this program would give future teachers additional experience before embarking on a teaching career.

f. *F.E.L.T.* The Federal Employee Literacy Training Program was instituted as part of President Reagan's "Literacy Initiative". To date, it has had little impact. One important aspect of the program, however, is making federal facilities available for tutoring, small group instruction, and office space. Congress should mandate that all federal facilities, where practical, provide free space for these activities, and that each Regional Office institute a program to encourage and support employees who wish to become literacy volunteers.

g. *JTPA.* The Job Training and Partnership Act should be amended to actively promote basic skills training for the low-level reader. Currently, the performance standards (Sec. 106) for Adult Training Programs under Title II are written in such a way as to encourage "creaming'—taking only those trainees with the highest skill levels—rather than addressing those who have the most need.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROGRAMS

a. Crucial to the success of the expanding volunteer literacy effort is coordination on a state level. The states with the most successful programs already have statewide bodies performing this function. Minnesota Literacy Council, Washington Literacy, and the South Carolina Literacy Association are excellent examples of well-coordinated statewide literacy organizations. Congress should ensure that all states have a statewide Literacy Coordinating Council, representative of all public and private efforts in the state, which would be responsible for implementing a statewide Volunteer Literacy plan to coordinate and promote the development of volunteer literacy programs.

b. Congress should also assist in the development of state and local volunteer literacy projects by providing funds for new projects and for projects which address the needs of special populations not presently being adequately served, including inner city poor, rural populations, refugees, Native Americans, and institutionalized populations. Grants for these projects should be made from a National Endowment for Literacy to be created by Congress and funded with public and private dollars, or through direct grants.

Finally, all sectors of government and all legislation should be sensitive to the literacy crisis. Just as the environmental impact of major construction projects is assessed before they begin, so should governmental actions be scrutinized for their impact on literacy. Government documents and regulations should be written in plain English, with a goal of making them simple to understand.

Eliminating illiteracy is a formidable task, but not beyond our means. As the nation's laragest volunteer literacy organization, Laubach Literacy Action is proud to be part of that effort, and we are committed to working with Congress to achieve that goal.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. AWILDA APONTE ROQUE, SECRETARY, PUERTO RICO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members: I am Awilda Aponte Roque, Secretary of the Department of Education. I thank you for your invitation to testify at this joint hearing of your two subcommittees as you examine the problem of illiteracy in America. It is an honor for me to represent testimony on the special aspects of this problem in Puerto Rico. We hope these comments will be of assistance to the Subcommittee in their joint deliberations.

Despite efforts using various educational alternatives to erradicate illiteracy, a high percentage of our population still lacks basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills.

At the turn of the century, 79.6 percent of the Puerto Rican population neither knew how to read nor write. In 1950, the year in which Puerto Rico began to draft its own Constitution, the United States Census revealed that 24.7 percent of the Island population over ten years old was illiterate. The average years of schooling completed by the population over 25 years old was 3.9 grades. The United States Census of 1980 indicated considerable improvement during the last three decades, but still an unacceptably high level of illiteracy as we approach the 21st century. Of the 1,614,613 Island residents in the productive ages between 18 and 59 years old 8.4% indicated they were unable to read or write in any language. Ability to read and write is the most basic definition of literacy.

However, in view of the complexity of society today, other definitions of literacy commonly are used. Literacy sometimes is defined in terms of basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills needed to be a functioning citizen. Eighth grade often is cited as the minimum level of schooling required to achieve literacy under this definition. While the 1980 Census showed that on an average the Puerto Rican population 25 years old or older had completed 9.4 years of schooling, 32% of the population in this age group had completed fewer than eight grades in school. Also 55,486 youths between 18 and 25 years old had not completed eighth grade. Of the total population between 18 and 59 years old, 443,221 or 27% had below an eighth grade education, so would be considered illiterate under this definition.

A third level of literacy, completion of high school, has become a minimum requirement for most jobs in any sector. Of the Puerto Rico population in its peak production years, 18 to 59 years olds, we already have seen that 443,221 have completed fewer than eight grades in school. Another 369,833 or 23% of persons in these age groups have not completed high school, though they have an eighth grade education or higher.

The Puerto Rico Department of Education Educational Extension Areas has three main goals. To reduce illiteracy in Puerto Rico, to raise the average years of schooling of the population to 12th grade, and, finally, to institute continuing education and life-long learning for the Island population.

Currently the Educational Extension Area has a variety of programs to achieve its first goal, the reduction of illiteracy.

By improving literacy levels, the Department would contribute to solutions to various social ills linked to illiteracy.

In August, 1985 in Puerto Rico there were 970,000 persons in the labor force. 197,316 were classified as illiterate. It is believed that this group contributes in large part to the 22.3% unemployment on the Island. Among members of the labor force with at least a high school diploma, the unemployment rate is only ten percent.

In 1955 nearly one third of the labor force on the Island was employed in agriculture. Now, thirty years later, this participation has dropped to 5.2%. In 1955 slightly less than one third of the labor force was employed in service industries such as transportation, communications, public utilities and the civil service. Now nearly two thirds of the work force are employed in these more highly skilled areas. During the 1950's the 17% of the work force employed in manufacturing worked in cottage industry, the apparel industry and light manufacturing. By the 1980's these concerns had been replaced by complex, high technology manufacturing such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, and scientific instruments.

The shift from an agrarian to an industrial society which has taken place in Puerto Rico over the last 30 years has resulted in changes in the types of management and supervisory personnel needed. At the beginning of the industrial era on the Island, most businesses and companies were run by persons transferred to Puerto Rico from the mainland United States. A recent, yet-to-be published study shows that currently 95% of the managers and supervisors are Puerto Rican.

The population has been prepared to adapt to these wrenching economic changes and the accompanying social shifts through education. Already we have mentioned the jump in average levels of school by six grades from 3.9 in 1955 to 9.4 grades in 1980. During the past three decades the number of young people pursing university studies has increased tenfold. In 1955 16,208 students were registered at public and private universities on the Island. In 1985 this was up to 155,726. Thousands more study at postsecondary institutions in the mainland United States and Europe.

Despite these rapid and important achievements in education and the economy of Puerto Rico, illiteracy remains a problem. It is not merely an individual problem. The illiterate person tends to depend more on public welfare programs. He or she tends to be a consumer rather than a producer. Illiteracy has been linked to crime. In April, 1985 the Puerto Rico Corrections Administration stated that the average level of schooling of the penal population serving sentences was eighth grade, lower than the general population. Ten percent of the prison population was illiterate.

The illiterate parent is unable to help his child in school. This is considered a major factor in the high dropout rate of school-aged children. Between 1980 and 1984 in Puerto Rico 106,336 students left school before graduation.

The programs of the Puerto Rico Department of Education have worked to combat these problems while improving the literacy level of the adult population. During the past three years 214,598 adults have participated in one component or another of the Educational Extension Area. Among these components and programs are alternate high schools for 16 to 21 year old dropouts; Night High School for adults; The Adult Basic Education Program for adults with below an eighth grade education; conversational English for adults; the Placement Tests Program; the televised "Opening Paths" Program for completion of the final year of high school; the public library system; community education programs and others.

During these past three years 26,271 or 12% of program participants obtained high school equivalency certificates. Another 6.6% or 14,142 graduated from night high school. 14,150 adults graduated from eighth grade. In 1984–85 alone 30,000 adult students advanced toward completion of eighth grade through the Adult Basic Education Program in Puerto Rico. The average expenditure per student, with a total of about $11.5 million available annually, was calculated at $93.00, with 58% of the funds coming from federal sources and another 42% from the Commonwealth budget.

These services are not provided in ideal circumstances. Classtime is severely limited. Adult education classes meet two hours daily, four days a week for sixty days each session. As there are 20 to 30 students in each class, teacher—student contact is limited.

The physical facilities are the same both for day and night school, so are better adapted to children in the regular program. The architecture is simple and takes advantage of natural lighting during the daytime. The artificial light available at night often is inadequate for study.

Since pockets of illiterate adults are scattered in mountain and coastal zones in Puerto Rico it is not feasible to concentrate resources in a few central adult education centers.

Special adult education materials have been developed for class levels through eighth grade. These address the interests of adult students and have been well accepted. However, high school grades are taught to adult students using the same curriculum and materials used in regular classrooms. The Puerto Rican program has the added limitation that, being taught in Spanish, it benefits little from materials developed for adult education programs in the mainland United States.

Most program teachers are recruited from the regular daytime teaching staff. They lack training in how to work with groups of adults, individualize learning, and use special techniques. Counsellors are needed to help adult students focus their educational goals and deal with personal and family problems. Students attending night school for the most part come from marginated social and economic groups. Besides their poor level of schooling, they tend to suffer problems of health, nutrition, housing, clothing and basic needs.

Even if we leave those program features as they are, considerably more resources would be needed just to reduce illiteracy in Puerto Rico by the modest goal of 5% over the next 10 years. Supposing we use the most restricted definition of illiteracy, the ability to read or write, 135,626 adults would qualify for these services. If we broaden the definition to include 18 to 59 year olds with below an eighth grade education, 443,221 would qualify, and this is assuming that everyone in the population below 18 attains literacy and schooling through the regular school programs. Most adults would require several semesters of teaching and study to attain literacy. Just estimating an average four semesters at a modest expenditure of $93.00 per semester per student, it would cost $50 million to give the totally illiterate basic reading and writing skills. At least twice that amount would be needed to bring all 18 to 59 year olds up to a minimum eighth grade level of schooling.

It has been argued that funds can be used with greater results by targeting them for pre-school and early elementary education, the years that set the tone for educational aspirations and instill basic literacy skills. We agree that resources dedicated to these purposes are worthily used.

However, a society cannot direct its educational efforts toward its children alone. The development of the economy cannot wait while these children grow and mature. The adult population of the moment must be incorporated into the work force and given the skills to be productive individuals. Furthermore, the adults do not only fulfill an economic function. In our democratic society they have cultural, social and political roles as well. As these functions and roles become more complex, the adults will need increasingly high levels of schooling and lifelong education.

It is customary to terminate testimony of this type with recommendations, and I will follow this worthy tradition.

First, we should continue to strengthen our regular school programs. To the degree in which we retain children and youths in school throughout the normal course of study, illiteracy will be erradicated. Federal support for programs such as Chapter I, and Chapter II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Head Start is vital in this effort.

Second, the adult education programs should be improved and expanded. Day programs are needed with flexible hours to accommodate the unemployed adult or the student with irregular work hours. Additional funds would be needed to contract full-time teachers and supervisors for this program.

Third, specially trained teachers are needed. One of the Island universities might offer a major in Adult Education. Few courses are offered in this specialization now. In-service training also could be expanded if resources were available.

These trained adult education teachers and their university professors could revise and develop curricular materials for the Program. More funding is needed for all of these activities.

For Puerto Rico when "expansion" and "improvement" are set as goals, obtaining federal funds often becomes a parallel goal. For the expansion and improvement of adult education, in order to reduce illiteracy in Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth recognizes the vital importance of Congressional attention to the problem and federal funding of solutions to it.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman, the National Education Association welcomes the opportunity to submit a statement for the record on the very sobering topic of lliteracy in America. Our 1.7 million members, the education employees of the nation's public schools and higher education institutions, are concerned that so many youngsters fall short of their goals and our expectations for them. We look at the statistics which say that one million teenagers cannot read above a third grade level, and what we see are the faces of children who have shut down along the road to scholastic achievement. For us, each child's face is a stark reminder that we as educators have a special mandate to stem the tide of illiteracy. The United Negro College Fund makes the point best, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste."

NEA believes we must eradicate illiteracy before America can truly be a land of opportunity. As reported in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, some 23 million American adults are functionally illiterate by the simplest tests of everyday reading, writing, and comprehension. Illiteracy erodes the quality of life for these individuals and costs the nation in real terms. The American Library Association estimates the cost of illiteracy among adults at $224 billion annually in welfare payments, crime, incompetence in the workplace, lost taxes, national security, and remedial education. Illiteracy exacts a high price in human as well as monetary terms.

ILLITERACY: THE GRIM REALITY

While the overall dropout rate has decined slightly in recent years—from 16.1 percent in 1971 to 15.3 percent in 1983—it does not give cause for celebration. The reality of these figures means that more than six million of the 41 million children now in school will not receive high school diplomas. The Children's Defense Fund recently reported that the dropout problem is more servere in big cities—now 16 percent above the national average—and among minorities. Today, 20 percent of Black youth and 33.9 percent of Hispanic youngsters are dropping out of school in contrast to the 14.5 percent dropout rate among whites.

Despite some new and creative endeavors, the number of youngsters who drop out of school and the increase in the incidence of illiteracy point to a growing crisis in this area of education. In his recent book entitled "Illiterate America," Johnathan Kozol reports staggering statistics on the prevalence of illiteracy in this country.

Fifteen percent of recent graduates of urban high schools read at less than sixth grade level.

One million teenage youngsters between 12 and 17 years of age cannot read above the third grade level.

Forty-seven percent of all Black 17-year-olds are functionally illiterate. This figure is expected to climb to 50 percent by 1990.

Eighty-five percent of the juveniles who come before our courts are functionally illiterate.

One-half the heads of households classified below the proverty line by federal standards cannot read at the eighth grade level.

Over one-third of mothers who receive support from welfare are functionally illiterate.

Sixty million Americans—one-third of the entire adult population—are functionally or marginally illterate.

The largest number of illiterate adults are white, native-born Americans. In proportion to population, however, the illiteracy figures are higher for Blacks and Hispanics than for whites. Among adults, 16 percent of whites, 44 percent of Blacks, and 56 percent of Hispanic citizens are functional or marginal illiterates.

Mr. Chairman, these statistics are particularly appalling when viewed in light of the mounting education reform movement with its goals of excellence. There is an illiteracy crisis thriving in the same academic environment as the demand for higher standards and graduation requirements. For true educational excellence, NEA believes we must reduce these illiteracy statistics and alter the scholastic forecast for this at risk population. And we must do this immediately.

EXISTING REMEDIES ARE INEFFECTIVE

A number of remedial and prevention programs currently exist to address the illiteracy problem. However, these programs are not adequately funded to meet the needs of targeted populations. If we look at the Chapter 1 program which has been widely hailed for reducing the achievement gap between white and minority students, we see a program rendered impotent by budget cuts and freezes. Inadequate funding has effectively locked out one-half the potential recipients of program service. Only one-half the affected elementary school population and very few high school students participate in the Chapter 1 program. It is significant that 790,000 fewer children were being served in the 1982–83 school year than in the 1979–80 school year—a 15 percent decline.

The existence of other programs, such as Adult Basic Education, bilingual education, Head Start, the Job Training Partnership Act, vocational education, refugee education programs, veterans' education programs, and the Department of Defense basic skills training programs, are serving only a portion of those eligible to participate. NEA believes that both adequate funding of programs which work and dedication to finding new, equally effective approaches will be necessary to achieve a significant reduction in illiteracy levels, But fully as important, we believe educators, lawmakers, politicans, parents, employers, and government agencies must learn why some students are not learning to read and why so many youngsters are dropping out of school.

NEA EFFORT TO COMBAT ILLITERACY: MASTERY IN LEARNING PROJECT

The National Education Association is fully aware that the challenge of eradicating illiteracy is no small task. We nonetheless began this effort several months ago when we established the Mastery in Learning Project. The Mastery in Learning project is a school-based education reform program. The Project was founded on the premise that the current movement to improve schools is not as effective as it could be because those matters that are central to schooling—learning, teaching, curriculum—are not the driving forces of reform. The Mastery in Learning Project focuses on these central elements and assists school faculties in developing individual reform agendas using site-specific professional development programs.

The Mastery in Learning Project is based on three essential premises.

Schools too often do not expect enough learning from students, either in terms of overall curriculum or individual attainment within that curriculum.

Decisions about student learning, teaching, and curriculum should guide all other educational decisions.

Every decision about learning and instruction that can be made by a local school faculty should be made by a local school faculty.

In March 1985 the Project began with an 18-month pilot phase that will delineate goals and strategies. The Project will test materials and techniques with six pilot schools during the 1985-86 school year. During phase II—September 1986 through August 1989—the Project will work with the facilities of 24 demonstration schools at sites across the nation to develop individual reform agendas. These schools will be demographically representative of students and teachers across the country. Each faculty, working with Project staff, will identify research-based options for school reform and develop specific reform agendas and plans. Together faculty and Project staff will try out, revise, and implement these plans. Results of the Mastery in Learning Project will be disseminated to the educational community and to policymakers and, we hope, serve as a pattern for broad-based reform nationwide.

NEA EFFORT TO COMBAT ILLITERACY: OPERATION RESCUE

During the 1985 NEA Convention, the Representative Assembly—the policymaking body of the organization—pledged $1.7 million to establish a permanent war chest against scholastic failure. This amount represents one dollar for each NEA member. Convention delegates voted to spend the 1985-86 school year planning the NEA campaign against illiteracy and the dropout phenomenon and encouraging our members to search for solutions. In the fall of 1986 NEA will fund the best of these solutions and turn them into rescue projects at all grade levels which will then serve as models for interested communities across the country. Convention delegates further agreed that the organization would devote $700,000 of the war chest to dropout and illiteracy prevention programs designed and developed at the local level by local NEA members. The remaining $1 million would be converted into an endowment for educational excellence.

NEA RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1963 President John F. Kennedy expressed concern about the number of young men unqualified for military duty because they could not read or do simple arithmetic. Many of them had received passing grades in grammar school, high school and—in a few instances—even in college. President Kennedy warned, "This situation must not be permitted to continue or its implications to unattended. These figures are an indictment and an ominous warning." NEA could not agree more with the words of President Kennedy. Illiteracy and the chronic dropout rate among our youth must be confronted and effectively dealt with. NEA has several recommendations in this regard.

Enact the School Excellence and Reform Act (SERA). The House bill (H.R. 2840) was introduced by Representative Augustus Hawkins (D-CA) and the Senate bill (S. 1660) was introduced by Senator Dodd (D-CT). SERA would offer every school district the assistance needed to design and implement strategies and programs for educational reform. It also provides additional resources to counter those special problems uncovered in the pursuit of excellence. SERA incorporates provisions for general aid for educational excellence as well as improved instruction in math, science, communication skills, technology education, and foreign languages, and for guidance and counseling. SERA contains targeted aid to meet the needs of historically unserved and underserved students. Such aid would fund dropout prevention programs, early childhood education, school day care, inservice teacher training, effective schools, and secondary basic skills. SERA demands accountability from state and local education agencies. It is results-oriented. Continued federal funding is assured only when measurable school and student improvement occurs in specific evaluation areas.

Provide adequate funding for existing programs in an effort to stem the tide of illiteracy and school dropouts. Federal programs such as Chapter 1, Head Start, adult basic education, and bilingual education must be adequately funded to meet the needs of target populations. Currently, state governments are the major source of revenue for public elementary and secondary schools. States are providing 49 percent of school revenues. Local governments are contributing 45 percent. The federal share of education funding is 6.2 percent—the lowest level sicne the 1960's. And when one considers the Administration's tax proposal to eliminate the deductibility of state and local taxes, even this paltry federal contribution is in jeopardy.

Encoruage the establishment of cooperative agreements among schools, parents, and business organizations in support of public schools. The importance of these three components of the community cannot be overemphasized. The schools are a natural spawning ground for young minds to develop. This process is a natural progression when parents have nurtured their youngsters mentally as well as emotionally. NEA believes collaborative efforts by the business community and the schools will help ensure the growth of our national economy.

Enact the Even Start Act (H.R. 2535; S. 1723). This legislation, introduced by Rep. William Goodling (R-PA) and Senator Chafee (R-RI), would establish a pilot program to develop methods for parents who are in adult literacy programs, and who have preschool age children who may be educationally at risk, to acquire the skills necessary to work at home with their children. This legislation would effectively cure systemic illiteracy which often recurs in succeeding generations of the same family. The foundations for reading and learning must be laid when children are of preschool age. The Even Start bill would teach parents how to effectively work with their children to help them succeed in school.

CONCLUSION

The National Education Association believes the recommendations outlined in this statement are achievable. Congressional enactment of the School Excellence and Reform Act and the Even Start bill, adequate funding of existing programs designed to stem the tide of illiteracy and school dropouts, and the development of cooperative efforts by the public schools, parents, and the business community will move this nation significantly closer to eradicating illiteracy. NEA believes these proposals are worthy of the time, resources, and commitment necessary to make them a reality.

William Woodside, Chief Executive Officer of the American Can Company, put it best when in testimony before Congress he said, "We must put aside for good the idea that there is a cheap and easy solution lying around somewhere that will enable us to improve our schools without using more resources, using resources differently, or changing the organization and incentives embodied in our public schools. I suggest that we view our educational programs and proposals for educational reforms as investments, and that we focus attention on their future benefits as well as immediate costs."

Mr. Chairman, NEA believes that as educatiors we have a clear and compelling obligation to lead the search for answers to the problems of illiteracy and student dropouts. We must find out how to prevent illiteracy—discover why some student are not learning to read. This burden of responsibility led NEA to act on its commitment to combat illiteracy by establishing the Mastery in Learning Project. We have since put muscle in our efforts to reduce the number of dropouts in the public schools by creating Operation Rescue.

If we as a nation are to eradicate illiteracy, we must work collaboratively in seeking out solutions. This endeavor will require all the resources, commitment, and hard work that such an important undertaking deserves. We must harness the power or our collective will and forge ahead toward the excellence we envision for our schools.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT E. MERRILL, VICE PRESIDENT, VIRGINIA TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the joint committees: The task before you committees is to find the reasons for illiteracy in the USA. That there should be widespread illiteracy in this country with its high standard of living and enormous amounts of money spend on education is simply amazing. Why is it that there are so many young people—and older ones too—who cannot read or figure properly? Yes, why, why? Where have the tax collections of our governments been misspent?

Obviously, there is no one answer to these questions, but a good place to start looking for a key answer is to see who has been trying to run the educational empire. One does not look far before finding the National Education Association. Much has been written about the NEA lately and generally the findings are not good. In summary, the NEA is found to be an educational mafia which is working to produce a new character in the American citizen. No longer will Americans be proud of their country, self-reliant and productive, but will be pliant semiliterates who will take orders in a socialistic society. This, we believe, is the secret agenda of the NEA, and why there are so many iliterates leaving our government schools. Thus, the action which your committees must take is clear—first, to expose the true goals of the NEA, and second, to seek dissolution of its strangehold on U.S. public education.

Along with the above actions, the phonics method of teaching reading must be recommended as a absolute essential. We in the Virginia Taxpayers Association have testified on this subject for the past two years before the joint budget committees of the Virginia General Assembly, pointing out that even at the state level, failure to teach phonics has cost taxpayers many millions. We are of course gratified that Sen. Edward Zorinsky cited and backed before your committees the recommendation of "Becoming A Nation Of Readers" that phonics should be used through the second grade. But beyond simply passing along the phonics recommendation, your committees should investigate to find out who has forced the other methods of teaching reading on unsuspecting children and why. Such an investigation would be one of the most worthwhile endeavors ever undertaken by the Congress.

Just the very briefest of glances into history, for example, would dig up NEA's arrogantly false declaration in their 1983–84 Annual Edition of "Today's Education" that "the overemphasis on phonics with beginners" is now "ready for the scrap heap." Your investigation should not overlook the many significant facts uncovered by the well-known researcher and author, Samuel L. Blumenfeld in his 1984 book, "NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education," among other helpful sources.

At the same time your committees should begin the process of getting the Federal Government out of involvement in education. The word "education" does not appear once in the United States Constitution. There was very little discussion of the subject by the framers of the Constitution in 1787. Further, there is no implication in the Constitution that citizens have a right to an education, as the Supreme Court has pointed out on several occasions. Of course, most state constitutions declare in one way or another that their citizens have a right to an education. Therefore, any activity by the Federal Government or any money appropriated for the purpose of education is clearly unconstitutional and illegal. Thus, another duty of your committees is clearly set forth. Your committees must recommend withdrawal by the Federal Government from all activities related to education, and must recommend the elimination of the Department of Education. The funding for the various programs should be phased out over two or three years. This action alone will save taxpayers billions, at a time when our federal budget and federal deficit are in crisis because of government overspending. To be sure, such curtailment will cause an uproar; change is always upsetting. The loudest squawks will probably come from top NEA officials and from the entrenched bureaucrats of the educational hierarchy. But these are the ones most responsible for the illiterate graduates, and are the ones who must step aside.

Finally, the States must be encouraged to return control of the schools to the local districts. This must be a token gesture, but a sincere move so that local districts can determine the educational philosophy and curriculum that the parents and taxpayers desire for their children.

I make these statements inpart from personal experience and reading. My wife and I have raised six children, but they were not educated in government schools. We quickly observed the dispiriting effect on the ones who started school first, and finally we sent all six to private schools. Subsequently, all have done well, gathering six masters degrees and one Ph.D., and good jobs. And today, I am able to observe the same problem with grandchildren. A grandson, started in government school, was doing poorly and losing interest in learning, but when transferred to a private school immediately became enthusiastic about learning. That school uses the phonics method of teaching reading and now my grandson is an excellent reader in the second grade.

Yes, there is a big job for your committees to do. The solution is not to throw additional money at the problem of illiteracy. The solution is to expose the activity of the National Education Association, tell the American public that phonics must be taught, and eliminate the involvement of the Federal Government. The State and local districts can handle the education of children in this nation. Thank you.

Prepared Statement of Ann Mactier, Member, Board of Education, Omaha Public Schools

Dear Congressman Hawkins, I was present at your hearings on October 1. That day, as usually happens in discussions of education, many factors came up, one by one, so that the focus of the hearing became less and less sharp.

Your committee might consider confining itself to the single question of why so many of our first grade children read less well than first grade children of other advanced countries. Once the reason for this situation is made clear, you could move on to other issues, if you wanted to.

I have studied the question for many years, and feel sure of what I say in my enclosed comments on the Summary Report by the Omaha Public Schools Special Education Department on their Chapter One Reading Program. The material brought out by the national report "Becoming a Nation of Readers," which you promised to read, applied here.

It is indeed hard to believe that the teaching of reading has been so much complicated by those who teach it in our schools. And why this has come to be is difficult to understand. But needless complication does exist and is harmful. The enclosed column by Ann Landers illustrates the difference in thinking between professional reading educators and other people.

Why does your committee not consider getting to the bottom of this basic issue? If you just brought out into the open the idea behind the reason why reading is being so poorly taught in most of our schools, you would be making an enormous contribution to the cause of good education in this country; because this idea is going to live on until people do take a good look at it.

When people once see it in all its confusion and complexity, they will understand the problem this country has and get past it to improve our literacy situation a great deal and very quickly.

Yours truly,

Ann Mactier,

Member Board of Education, Omaha Public Schools.

October 13, 1985

COMMENTS ON THE OPS REPORT, SUMMARY--CHAPTER I READING PROGRAM, AND LIGHT SHED ON IT BY BECOMING A NATION OF READERS

by Ann Mactier

I make these comments only in the desire to constructively serve the cause of our doing a better job of teaching our children to read. I sincerely hope they will do so.

The Summary states: "From its inception, the major focus of the reading segment of the Title I/Chapter I instructional programs has been the improvement of reading comprehension skills. Chapter I reading programs are designed to meet the instructional needs of eligible students in grades kindergarten through nine..."

Right here, in my opinion, is the crux of the nation's reading problem. Children can not comprehend what they can not read. And time should not be spent teaching comprehension of materials that have little substance, like beginning reading materials. We are putting the cart beside the horse. Comprehension has to follow learning to read.

In my opinion, a better focus for Title I/Chapter I programs would be to teach primary grade children to write, spell and read, and to enjoy reading--to the extent that they can and do read real world materials; that is, materials that are not limited to sound-symbol correlations that have been taught. First graders, all but the obviously very deficient, can and should learn the code of the necessary sound-symbol correlations in about two months; and learn to read--anything they want to by the end of first grade. In schools where they do, there is little need for remediation or counseling programs. There is no need for remediation through grade nine. And, there is no need later on, say in grade four, for children to have to make a difficult transition to real world materials--because they have been reading real world materials from the beginning.

Where does this widely-prevailing theory that reading remediation programs should focus on comprehension come from? I believe it comes from the idea insisted upon by most reading teaching professionals that children who learn to sound out words will not comprehend what they read.

Attached is a sheet that names several pieces of research that say that learning the various sounds of our language does not interfere with comprehension; and that children who learn to spell the sounds learn to read more easily and quickly than those who do not.

This research wipes out the reason for OPS complicating the teaching of children to read by insisting that they study the individual sounds of our language only in whole words. We should stop this practice immediately, because what we are doing

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complicates and confuses unnecessarily the teaching of reading and fails a great many children.

The Summary report on Chapter I says that our reading programs emphasize oral language development. This is fine, of course, but more needs to done. The most effective methods of teaching little children to read combine oral language development with teaching them to write the letters correctly and to memorize the sounds they stand for.

Becoming a Nation of Readers says these things about teaching little children to read:

What the child who is least ready for systematic reading instruction needs most is ample experience with oral and printed language, and early opportunities to begin to write. (p. 29)

"Probably, however, knowledge of letter names is not important in itself, as it is a reflection of broader knowledge about reading and language This conclusion follows from the further fact, when children who enter kindergarten without knowing the letter names are trained to name them, they show little later advantage in reading. In contrast, children taught the sounds letters make, as well as their names, show better reading achievement than those who know only the letter names." (p. 31)

"Pre-school and kindergarten reading readiness programs should focus on reading, writing and oral language. Knowledge of letters and their sounds, words, stories; and question-asking and answering, are relative to learning to read; but there is little evidence that coloring, cutting with scissors, or discriminating shapes--except for the shapes of letters--promote reading development." (p. 117)

The Summary report on Chapter I says that our reading programs "are evaluated in terms of participant growth in reading comprehension, growth measured by pretest-posttest measures of reading comprehension; and analysis of California Achievement Test data. This data indicates those Chapter I program participants whose reading comprehension skills have improved to grade level....

"A comparison of the average fall and spring reading comprehension measures indicates that the program participants increased their instructional reading levels from the twenty-first to the thirty-second percentile. A further indication of the positive impact of these reading progams reveals that twenty-seven percent of the participating students attained a grade-level appropriate measure in reading comprehension during the last school year." While these reports are certainly positive, much better results than this should be forthcoming. Much better results are possible. Children older than 5, all but those who are obviously deficient, can learn to read in a year; and once they do this, they should be able to comprehend on the printed page anything they can comprehend orally.

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As to the testing methods used, the report Becoming a Nation of Readers says: "A more valid assessment of reading proficiency than standardized tests are the following procedures: Have the children read aloud unfamiliar, grade-appropriate material with acceptable fluency; write satisfactory summaries of unfamiliar selections from grade-appropriate social studies and science text books; explain the plots and motivations of the characters in grade-appropriate, unfamiliar fiction; and read extensively from books, magazines and newspapers during liesure time." (p. 93)

"If the schools are to be held accountable for reading test scores, the tests must be broad-gauged measures that reflect the goals of instruction as closely as possible. Otherwise, teachers and students may concentrate on peripheral skills that are easily tested and readily learned.... Despite their inherent shortcomings, standardized reading comprehension tests are the most broad-gauged measures of reading proficiency now in general use.

"The other reading sub-tests provide information that may be of some diagnostic value for classroom decision making. However, schools should not overemphasize scores on these subtests, because they only measure skills of subsidiary importance and need very little attention. For the same reason, schools should not emphasize the total reading score because it is a composite of subtests that have little significance.

"The reading "mastery skills" tests sold by basal reader publishers and other vendors attempt no assessment of reading comprehension. Instead, they cover a large number of subsidiary skills and concepts. Overemphasis on skill mastery tests unbalances a reading program and takes attention away from the integrated act of reading. Increased use of skill mastery tests is probably one cause of the extraordinary amount of time devoted to work books and skill sheet exercises in American class rooms."(pp. 99, 100)

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FURTHER IMPORTANT STATEMENTS MADE BY BECOMING A NATION OF READERS

WHEN SHOULD SYSTEMATIC READING INSTRUCTION BEGIN?

"According to a view dating back to the 1930's, children are 'ready' to learn to read only when they reach a certain level of maturity. The typical child was thought to reach this level at the age of about six and one-half, though the time might be earlier or later for particular children depending upon their physical, social and intellectual development. Until a child reached the requisite level of maturity, it was believed that systematic reading instruction would be unproductive or even harmful.

"There is a kernel of good sense in the idea of reading readiness for instruction. Formal, organized instruction may be unproductive for children who still cry when their mothers leave them at school, who cannot sit still in their seats, or who cannot follow simple directions....

"In the past, under the belief that it would develop readiness for reading, kindergarten children were taught to hop and skip, cut with scissors, name the colors, and tell the difference between circles and squares. These may be worthwhile skills for four and five year olds, but skill in doing them has a negligible relationship with learning to read. There are schools, nevertheless, that still use reading readiness checklists that assess kicking a ball, skipping or hopping. Thus, reading instruction is delayed for some children because they have failed to master these physical skills or other skills with a doubtful relationship to reading....

"When should systematic reading instruction begin, then? There is a wealth of evidence that children can benefit from early reading and language instruction in pre-school and kindergarten. Available data suggest that the best short term results are obtained from programs that can be characterized as formal, structured and intensive, though whether these programs have greater long-term benefits is less clear. Good results are also obtained with informal, though not haphazard programs.

"Based on the best evidence available at the present time, the Commission favors a balanced kindergarten program in reading and language that includes both formal and informal approaches. The point is that instruction should be systematic but free from undue pressure. We advise caution in being so impatient for our children that we turn kindergartens, and even nursery schools and day care centers, into academic boot camps." (pp. 28-30)

READING GROUPS

The report has much to say about the practice in use in nearly all schools in the country, including ours, of dividing children up into reading groups of differing ability levels. It says that some

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scholars say that it is not so much ability that determines the future attainment of a young child, as the reading group in which he is initially placed.

It says there are qualitative differences in the experience of high and low reading groups that would be expected to place children in low reading groups at a disadvantage. Children in low reading groups do less reading. They more often read words without meaningful contexts on lists or flash cards and less often in stories.

Meaning of words or passages are less often discussed in low groups. Teachers ask simpler, more factual questions of children in low groups and fewer questions that require reasoning. Low groups are less engaged with the lesson than high groups. One reason is that low groups include children who are low in "social maturity"--that is, children perceived as trouble makers or as unwilling to pay attention, as well as those of low ability.

In higher groups children often police one another. Children in low groups may distract one another. Teachers tolerate more interruptions in high groups than low ones.

It is difficult to change a group during a year. And changing from one year to the next is difficult, since teachers form groups at the beginning of the year on the basis of last year's standings. It is frequently true that "once a bluebird, always a bluebird," and that many birds fall ever farther behind.

This problem is poignantly highlighted by one very important statement made in the report: "The means for assessing reading ability, particularly the ability of children in kindergarten and first grade, are often fallible." The conclusion reached here for this unacceptable situation of separating children into ability reading groups is that "educators should explore other options for reading instruction. One option is more use of whole class instruction." (pp. 90, 91)

This option is used very well by both competent Spalding teachers and Marva Collins' teachers. They use whole class reading groups entirely. There are no bluebirds. All children learn to read by Christmas. OPS should send teachers to take Marva Collins' teacher course, to see what children can read and enjoy reading. Merit bonuses for teachers who can accomplish what hers do would pay for themselves many times over in value received; because Marva Collins' children, many of whom are inner city children, are all ready, willing and able to take strong academic courses when they get to highschool.

LITERATE CLASSROOMS

"Teachers who are successful in creating literate environments have classrooms that are simultaneously stimulating and disciplined." (p. 85, 86)

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"Learning to read appears to involve close knitting of reading skills that compliment and support each other, rather than learning one skill at a time and then adding them together." (p. 97)

"The most logical place for instruction in most reading and thinking strategies is in social studies and science rather than in separate lessons about reading. Strategies are useful mainly when the student is grappling with important but unfamiliar content. Outlining and summarizing make sense only when there is some substantial material to be outlined or summarized. The idea that reading instruction and subject matter should be integrated is an old one in education, but there is little indication that such integration occurs often in practice." (p. 73)

"Schools that are especially effective in teaching children to read are characterized by vigorous instructional leadership....

"Schools that are especially effective in teaching reading have a high, but realistic, expectation of children and keep attention focused on what is being read. There is clear articulation of what will be taught when. Academic excellence is honored as much or more as are band or chorus or athletic achievement. (pp. 111, 112)

WORK BOOKS AND WRITING

"Students spend up to 70% of the time allocated for reading instruction in independent practice or "seat work." This is an hour per day in the average class room. Most of this time is spent on work books and skill sheets. Children spend considerably more time with their work books than they do receiving instructions from their teachers.

Publishers say that the demand for seatwork activities is insatiable. To meet the demand, most publishers supply a range of supplementary exercise sheets in addition to workbooks which relate to the basal reading lessons. Many teachers use the exercises of several publishers as well as ones they have prepared themselves. In the course of a school year it would not be uncommon for a child in the elementary grades to bring home 1,000 workbook pages and skill sheets completed during the reading period.

"Analysis of work book activities reveal that many require only a perfunctory level of reading. Children rarely need to draw conclusions or reason on a high level. Few activities foster fluency, or constructive and strategic reasoning. Almost none require any extended writing. Instead, responses usually involve filling in a word in a blank, circling or underlining an item, or selecting one of several choices. Many work book exercises drill students on skills that have little value in learning to read. The exercises sometimes have difficult-to-understand directions and confusing art work. A serious problem is that some work book pages

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and many skill sheets are poorly integrated with the rest of the reading lesson." (p.74)

"Moreover, in the all too typical classroom, too much much of the precious time available for reading instruction is given over to workbook and skill sheet tasks and students invest only the most perfunctory level of attention in the tasks. For these problems teachers and administrators are responsible. The conclusion is that workbook and skill sheet tasks should be pared to the minimum that will actually contribute to growth in reading." (p. 76)

Writing can be included in the earliest stages of reading instruction. Research suggests that the finer points of writing, such as punctuation and subject-verb agreement, may be learned best while students are engaged in extended writing that has the purpose of communicating a message to an audience. But no communicative purpose is served when children are asked to identify on a work sheet the parts of speech, or the proper use of shall and will. (p. 80)

INDEPENDENT READING

"Increasing the amount of time children read ought to be a priority for both parents and teachers. Reading books and magazines and newspapers, and even comic books, is probably a major source of knowledge about sentence structure, text structure, literary forms and topics ranging from the Bible to current events....
1
"Independent reading is probably a major source of reading fluency. In contrast to work book pages or computer drills, the reading of books provides practice in the whole art of reading. Practice in this form is likely to be particularly effective in increasing the automaticity of word identification skills. Avid readers do twenty times or more independent reading as do less frequent readers. This means they are getting vastly more practice and helps to explain why children who read a lot make more progress in reading." (p. 77)

"Analysis of schools that have been successful in promoting independent reading suggest that one of the keys is ready access to books.... In addition to school libraries, several projects have demonstrated the value of class room libraries. Children in class rooms with libraries read more, express better attitudes towards reading, and make greater gains in reading comprehension than children who do not have such ready access to books....

"Other features of school programs that are associated with increased independent reading include activities to interest children in books, guidance in choosing books from someone who knows both the children and the books, and time set aside during the day for independent reading. Research shows that the frequency with which children read, in and out of school, depends upon the priority class room teachers give to independent reading."(pp. 77-79).

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REPORT ON BECOMING A NATION OF READERS, continued
by Ann Mactier

DISAGREEMENTS

The research reported on probably does not include research on either of the two methods I consider best for teaching children to read, since to my knowledge none has been done. I include here my experiences and observations on these two systems--the Spalding Method and the Open Court method, as adapted by Marva Collins.

The report says: Children enter a typical kindergarten class with very different levels of knowledge about the printed language, and instruction needs to be adapted for these differences. (p 31).

When either the Spalding Method or the Open Court method as adapted by Marva Collins are used, there is not a great problem of this kind. All the children can profit by learning the same things, as shown by the following statements:

First, all kindergarten children learn through these methods good penmanship. Oma Riggs, teaching Spalding, is superlative at teaching penmanship. The work is tremendously useful, for the following reasons:

1- Children with undeveloped motor skills, as well as those with good motor skills, write letters beautifully in a few weeks, or months. And, because five year olds are very interested in learning to write, even the most active of them can be taught to remain engrossed in the activity for appreciable amounts of time, thereby developing good concentration and work habits.

2- Practicing writing the Orton/Spalding letters, used by both these systems, successfully teaches all children to write and read letters and words from top to bottom and left to right. Many very precocious children have serious reversal problems.

3- All children can come to enjoy making beautiful papers and get off to an early start at being proud of good workmanship. Many good readers do sloppy work.

4- All children profit from good feelings of success and accomplishment about beautiful work they have done and are motivated by it to undertake new ventures.

5- The letters used in these systems are especially useful. They are easy to learn to print, and can be turned into cursive writing very simply any time the teacher shows the children how.

A second reason why all kindergartners are taught the same things in a Spalding or Marva Collins kindergarten, regardless of what abilities they come in with, is that all of them enjoy and profit by finding the order in the English language, and learning where

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the spellings of words of foreign derivation came from. They enjoy learning the phonograms, too, and the process gives many first tasks in comprehension. Learning the concepts illustrated by the code is extremely important and useful.

A third reason for working with all comers pretty much together in kindergarten is that learning to say and write the phonograms in about two months time and using them afterwards in writing, spelling and reading, quite soon makes using the code automatic. After a while, the child seldom thinks about it.

A fourth reason is that children who learn to read accurately and easily will read, and enjoy reading, and form life-long habits of reading, especially if they learn to read before the age of seven. Children choose most of their own books in these kindergartens, and those who read easily pick books that suit them.

And a last reason for educating all kindergarten children together is that all normal children can move into life equipped with confidence and skills and pleasurable, orderly feelings about school. There are no bluebirds.

The report says: Phonics instruction should be kept simple, and it should be done by the end of the second grade for most children. (p.118)

No, I think there is a better way. Dr. Orton's simple, complete code can be learned in about two months. And learning it is better than learning many more little bits of phonics information spread over two years. The latter practice is splintered and confusing, and less organized, than learning the simpler code quickly first. The code will have to be reinforced, of course, in spelling, writing and reading through the primary grades. But by the fourth grade, the teaching of the skills of penmanship, spelling, reading and basic grammar can be finished for all the children.

The report says: In an excess of zeal to get phonics across, some programs introduce the sounds of many letters before providing opportunities to use what has been learned, in reading words in sentences and stories. (p. 57)

No. I believe it is better to postpone the reading of stories for two months, until children have a rough idea of all the different spellings of the sounds. Postponing reading serves to whet the appetite; and once children have learned the code, they can go right into reading anything they want. They can skip the insipid, boring pieces that are written to stay within vocabulary confined to words whose sound-spellings have been taught.

In the long run, learning the code first gets children into reading real world material much faster and less painfully than trying to read before they know how. Doing this takes advantage of the magic moments when children want very badly to learn to

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read, and eliminates a later possibly difficult transition into real world material.

One can hardly say honestly that a system that teaches a complete, phonics code successfully and easily in about two months time, by keeping it simple and by not adding extraneous elements to the process, is "an excess of zeal."

On the other hand, children should start to read, write and spell words and sentences that involve the sounds and spellings, as they are learned. This process goes hand in hand with learning the code.

The report says: When children do not feel too constrained by requirements for correct spelling and penmanship, writing activities provide a good opportunity for them to apply and extend their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. (p. 34)

Yes, but why not teach them to spell and write? Six year old children can learn to write the letters and spell the sounds in about two months time. During the same two months they can establish a basis for good spelling and good penmanship, which can be reinforced and practiced in spelling lessons and in beginning to write original sentences.

It is a good thing to get children in the habit of accurate, careful work from the beginning, and in so doing to "apply and extend their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences." Careful work in first grade will help them to write papers for the rest of their lives that will not require extensive marking by teachers who have to correct them. Also, most children enjoy learning to do beautiful, correct work papers at ages four, five and six. It is harder to get them to do this later.

The report says: The important point is that a high proportion of the words in the earliest selections children read should conform to the phonics that have already been taught. (p. 47)

No. This is the error that has led us into giving children materials in which to begin reading that are hardly worth the pain--materials that waste the enthusiasm of the moment and that do not prepare for real world reading. Better to wait until children are able to read things that are beautiful and exciting, things they want to read.

The report says: Even under the best of circumstances, round robin reading is not ideal for developing fluency and comprehension. An alternative technique that has proved successful in small-scale tryouts is to have children repeatedly read the same selection until a standard of fluency is attained. (p. 54).

Well, there are probably good uses of this, but in my opinion, when children read easily, and so understand what they read, such

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practice is not necessary. It could be quite boring to the other children, and to the teacher, to have to listen to the same passage read over and over again. There is no life in that. I would rather teach the class to memorize a lovely poem every week. Listening to each child take his turn saying the poem would be repetitious, too, but would not be as tiresome as having them read it; and every child in the room would remember the poem forever. Also, this is work that leads to emotional and oral development.

For daily reading aloud, I like Marva Collins' idea of having the class read classical literature together. This is material children can't handle without help. Mrs. Collins' teachers make it come alive by keeping up an energetic pace, even when they stop to enlarge upon the material being read. The children fight for a turn to read; and if they read well, they get a longer one. The activity is pleasurable for everybody; and since there are no reading groups, the whole class is involved. No time is wasted, and no one is bored.

The report says: *Large publishing companies invest upwards of $15,000,000 to bring out new basal reading programs. Within budgets of this size, surely, it is possible to hire gifted writers who can create stories far superior to the standard fare.*(p. 48)

No. I don't think so. Great stories are few and far between. A given writer probably has only a few within him. Usually, it takes years before real greatness is recognized. You probably can't hire people to write great stories. The classic fairy tales, legends and myths have endured because they ring true and affect us all in ways we do not completely understand. We should assign things to read that have had the most success in turning children on to reading. Some anthologies are better than others. I saw an article on the subject in the *New York Times Book Review* this summer.

There are modern works, of course, that strike everyone as outstanding almost immediately, as *Charlotte's Web* did. Good modern works should be made available, too. The important thing is to have a whole lot of nourishing books ready-at-hand in the class rooms, where children can see them and browse through them and teachers may point them out any time. Good books can be bought second hand cheaply enough that they need not be catalogued. And people can be persuaded to donate books.

The point is, start children out with the best while they are still excited about learning to read.

The report says: *In summation, prospective elementary school teachers should have extensive preparation in reading...* (p. 108).

If this refers to having teachers take more courses than they already do in teaching children how to read, I disagree. They are already taking too many. One teacher course in the Spalding or Open Court method as used by Marva Collins, repeated once or twice after being tried, is enough teacher-training in the skill. Once a teacher knows how to teach children how to read, the emphasis passes to educating them--to content. From then on, the teacher uses her own knowledge and talents to feed children's minds and fire natural, first grade enthusiasm.

What teachers need, elementary and secondary both, is a good general education, such as benefits anyone. Secondary teachers should major or minor in fields they will teach. Elementary teachers need extensive experience in literature. These studies will increase teachers' love for learning, appreciation of great works, and ability to turn children on to reading. And the teachers will themselves grow from the literature study as well.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT LEARNING HOW TO SPELL THE SOUNDS DOES NOT HARM THE ABILITY TO COMPREHEND

studies previously discussed, they made recommendations favoring a code-emphasis approach to beginning reading. Williams concluded:

> It seems to me that the evidence suggests that you might as well provide the child with a good decoding program. Clearly, such instruction teaches basic skills more effectively. As far as the ultimate goal of comprehension is concerned, it hasn't been demonstrated that decoding instruction helps; but it certainly doesn't seem to hurt. (p.9)

Resnick concluded in a similar fashion:

> First, as a matter of routine practice, we need to include systematic, code-oriented instruction in the primary grades, no matter what else in also done. This is the only place in which we have any clear evidence for any particular practice. We cannot afford to ignore that evidence or the several instructional programs already in existence that do a good job of teaching the code. The charge . . . that too early or too much emphasis on the code depresses comprehension, finds no support in the empirical data. On the other hand . . . there is no evidence that code-emphasis programs alone will "solve" the reading problem. (p.13)

The independent conclusions of these prominent researchers are remarkably similar, as they both point out that: (1) there is evidence that a code-emphasis approach teaches the word recognition aspect of reading more effectively and (2) while there is no evidence that code-emphasis facilitates comprehension, there is no evidence either that it inhibits comprehension. Thus, the more meaning-emphasis approaches have not succeeded in teaching comprehension any better than the code-emphasis approaches in that meaning-emphasis approaches do not result in higher test scores.

It is appropriate to conclude this section by noting that I am in complete agreement with Mathews (1966) who, in an excellent historical account of reading instruction, noted:

> No matter how a child is taught to read, he comes sooner or later to the strait gate and the narrow way: he has to learn letters and the sounds for which they stand. There is no evidence whatever that he will ultimately do this better from at first not doing it at all. (p.208)

It is my conclusion that children will learn letter–sound relationships more easily if they are taught some of the letter–sound correspondences in an explicit and direct way and if they encounter decodable words in their beginning reading materials.

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READING RESEARCH: ADVANCES IN THEORY AND PRACTICE, VOL. 2

READING PROBLEMS AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

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Over the years, it has been my experience that teacher's descriptions of students' reading problems come in three packages. Package one contains descriptions of student behaviors such as "guesses at the pronunciation of words," "can't remember his sight words," "doesn't know her vowel sounds," and numerous other behavior descriptions symptomatic of children who are having difficulties with the print-to-speech

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ISBN 0-12-572302-4

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October 21, 1985

OPINIONS ABOUT A PROBLEM OF OUR TIMES: THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN FROM LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS

by Ann Mactier

QUESTION: How do we educate children from low socio-economic backgrounds well?

ANSWER: Teach them to talk, write, spell and read anything they want to, in that order, by the end of the first grade; and get them to read a lot in the primary grades. Reading builds vocabulary, develops the emotions, and turns children on to school.

QUESTION: Is it possible to teach first graders all these things?

ANSWER: Yes, if you know how.

QUESTION: How?

ANSWER: Teach them the code of the English language--teach them to hear, see, say and write the code before you give them anything to read. Then, during the ages of six, seven and eight enlarge the use of the code into extensive writing and reading.

QUESTION: Can you really teach first graders to write?

ANSWER: Yes, if you know how.

QUESTION: Isn't writing difficult for many little children?

ANSWER: Yes, and for some it is very difficult. But it is also necessary. Teaching a child to control his body with his mind is vital for him.

QUESTION: How do you motivate little children to do this difficult work?

ANSWER: Children at ages four, five and six want more than anything to learn to read and write--to communicate with the other people in the world. We should take advantage of this natural motivation at these ages to teach them these hard skills, calmly and persistently.

QUESTION: How long does learning to write take?

ANSWER: Most children can learn to write beautifully in a few months time, slowly and painstakingly at first, then more easily and faster. All normal children can learn to write by the end of first grade. And many retarded children can also.

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QUESTION: Couldn't you just leave off this writing until children are older and give them typewriters to use now?

ANSWER: No. Do not do this. Children can learn to control their bodies at these ages, and need to learn to. By all means, do not let them skip handwriting. To do so is to handicap them tremendously. Teach them now, when they are willing to suffer the pain.

QUESTION: Why is it so important that children learn to write before they read?

ANSWER: Because, writing the letters correctly and putting them on lines neatly, with spaces in between the words, teaches children exactly what the letters look like. They will not then read backwards or upsidedown.

QUESTION: What else should we teach children before the end of first grade?

ANSWER: Teach them basic math concepts and health practices. Teach them to remember by memorizing songs and poetry, and by visualization exercises. Teach them to dance and sing and recite poetry. Get them to see the beauty all around them in nature--in the sky and on the ground. These activities will awaken them mentally, emotionally, and spiritually and will contribute greatly to their getting out of poverty and accomplishing beautiful lives.

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10/23/85

Zorinsky Answers Woman Whose Child Can't Read

News America Syndicate

Ann Landers

Dear Ann Landers: I'd like to share some information with your readers in response to the letter from the woman whose child was not learning to read.

A commission of experts recently completed a report called "Becoming a Nation of Readers."

The report stressed the need for parents to read to their preschool children. It also recommended that schools use phonic instructions — sounding out words — through the second grade.

Testimony at a Senate hearing last year indicated that only about 15 percent of our schools use this method. The majority use a method that requires students to memorize or guess whole words.

Most children can learn to read by any method. However, some cannot learn by the whole-word method no matter how intelligent they are. Their frustration can lead to behavioral problems. Some become dropouts.

Parents should find out what kind of instructions their school uses, particularly if their children are having reading problems or if they are told the child has a learning disability.

Some children are classified as "learning disabled" when in reality they are suffering from poor teaching methods.

The teachers themselves should not be blamed, because they are also victims of poor instruction by our teacher-education institutions.

Our schools of education must start training teachers properly. Parents should demand an end to this education malpractice, not only for the sake of their children's future but for the future of our country.

Edward Zorinsky
U.S. Senator

I asked for a comment from the head of one of the country's finest teaching institutions. Here is what Orley R. Herron, president of the National College of Education in Evanston, Ill., has to say:

"Dear Ann Landers: You are right to be concerned. Reading is a complex and important skill. But knowledgeable parents can help their children on the road to reading.

"Children need to understand the link between sound and letters, but phonics has its limits. Many words, even simple ones like 'give' and 'one,' are not pronounced as they are spelled. This is especially true in the English language, which draws from many other tongues.

"Most beginning reading texts include, along with phonics, other word recognition methods to help children learn not just how to sound out letters, but how to understand what they are reading.

"Parents can help. Read to your child and make the world of books come alive. Read books yourself and let him see that reading is both important and fun.

"Give him paper and pencil to practice 'writing.' Write notes and talk to him to help build his vocabulary.

"The teachers we train at the National College of Education learn the latest research on reading, as well as practical classroom applications. And our new doctoral program in reading is getting teachers into the research findings more quickly than ever.

"Learning to read and teaching children to read is a complex undertaking. But working together, parents, teachers and teacher educators can open the door of reading to a new generation of children."

NO! Teach them to read. You don't teach children "how to understand what they read." You get them to read challenging, beautiful, thought-provoking materials. Then, get them to thinking about them and discussing them and figuring them out for themselves.

Ann Mactier

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October 11, 1985

A TALK ON TEACHER TRAINING

Given to the Council of Greater City Schools,
September 28, 1985, by Judith Lanier,
Dean of the School of Education, Michigan State University,
Reported by Ann Mactier

In 1970 a proposed goal of having a gifted, educated, teacher in every class room was an illusion. We needed 250,000 teachers. Teaching was a huge occupation and still is. It is the largest occupation requiring a college degree.

Teachers were still mostly women in 1970, and most of them quit teaching when their children came. Or teachers were men who remained teachers only until they could do better. Many of them became principals or superintendents.

In the last generation there was a major turnover every year in the teaching field. So why would anyone invest a major amount of education in such a transient field?

Colleges of Education have been the least important cog in university hierarchies. Who are the teachers of teachers? They are everyone, and no one. There are no common requirements for teachers of teachers. There is even tension in teacher colleges between between teachers of teachers and teachers of administrators.

Control of teacher colleges usually belongs to a university committee, on which colleges of education have only one vote, so authority for teacher education is hard to fix. Colleges of education are off to one side in a university and have little status, certainly lower status than other colleges in a university. They have changing, often incoherent focus and programs.

It is almost impossible to describe a teacher college curriculum. Descriptions are usually brief and fragmented, having little in common among the various colleges, and lacking in depth. There is great variance across the country in what should be required of teachers in major and minor subject fields. You can hardly get a handle on teacher college faculty. Anyone can teach teachers. Anyone can be a consultant. Now there is a new, emerging group called staff developers.

The students of teaching across the country know that many of the courses they take in teacher college are not worth while.

Popular conceptions in the press say that teachers are not very smart. This is only partially true. The mass of today's teachers will fall below the average for all college graduates. But if you divided the mass of all college graduates in 1970 into quintiles, 11% of the top quintile in the 1970s pursued teaching. That is

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not bad, when you consider that all the professions were competing for these people. But now only 7% of the people in the top quintile go into teaching. And only 3% stay.

But to go back to 1970, 11% per cent of the top quintile went into teaching; 16% of the second quintile, 21% of the third, 26% of the fourth and 38% of the lowest quintile. The range is not dissimilar to today.

The problem is not that we do hot have enough people from the top quintile but that we have too many from the bottom one. If we were to get selective, and decline to accept the people in the lowest quintile into education college, the majority of the people entering would be above the average of college graduates.

Another point: the people going into teacher college influence where the curriculum gets set. The large low group now drives out curriculum that would interest the high groups and thus drives high people out. Again, we could remedy this situation by declining to accept people from the lowest group. And, to draw from the top 60% of those who apply is not to be overly selective. Then, if we could just keep the best of these, we would be okay. We would have some truly interested and good people in the teaching profession.

But we will have to draw 200,000 people this year. It was 150,000 in the 1970s. Now it is 200,000. That means we have to work with all the average group and above.

What can we offer people to keep them? What is it like to be a teacher? There is new good data on the influence of occupations on the way people think. The data says that the occupation of teaching is apt to have a negative effect on the minds and spirits of the people in it.

It is simply not true, what people say, that in former times old maid teachers were teachers because they loved it. Their diaries show a different story. They show, too, that prolonged work with young people, and lack of interaction with adults, have a deletorious effect. So do long hours, low pay and inattentive and undisciplined students. So do mechanical routines, supervisory machines, and extensive record keeping. Often allowed to use no originality, teachers may become reclusive and powerless. So, to say, "Teaching is not what it used to be," is only partially correct.

Teaching is not an easy job. Correcting papers from 150 kids at five minutes a paper adds up to 12 1/2 hours each time. There are problematic things about the way class rooms are run. The work place itself chases people out. Those who remain, not having any better opportunities, are apt to be the less interested and less adept.

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So the "tell me what to do" attitudes take over, along with the less academically able and the uncommitted. Good people are apt to be driven out by the apathetic.

Inservice is hard to get a hold on. We don't really know what to do with it. An example: we train class room teachers to wait, to give students a chance to take time to think. But then time on task is lost, and some kids get bored. First teachers say it works, then they say it doesn't.

So what do we teach teachers? We tell them to wait longer for some kinds of teaching than others, and for some children. What is needed is a professional teacher who knows how to handle class rooms.

Do we really know how to prepare teachers? It is a question.

Do we know how to teach children? We have not had a lot of success with children from the lower income areas.

Yet today we have to teach all the children. There are more difficult kids. We need better teachers than ever before, better trained and better qualified. And teacher education institutions are not geared up for the new times. There are more difficult kids. Good teachers are leaving the field.

Massive work and massive development are needed, and there is no more money available for it. But I think we are going to get some in the end. Because no one is really equipped now to do a good job of teaching teachers. And the fact is that we can't afford to have a single member of society become dependent on a dole.

But we do understand the limitations and the problems of teacher colleges now, and we have a better chance of solving them because of that.

What we have to do is prepare a professional work force, one able to make good decisions under uncertain conditions. We have to try to make about 1/5th of our teachers well-trained and well-educated.

We need career professionals and a work corps. We need a national teaching service. Let it start out in our inner cities. It wouldn't matter if they had education degrees. We must no longer permit education majors to be our baccalaureate teachers. We have to find ways not to turn to the least academically talented to help us improve our schools.

We do not have ways to turn out good teachers now. And our clients--our children--can not object to what we do. We do not let them vote with their feet. Adult learning is different. It has to be relevant and understandable.

The fact is that teachers need more than warmth and caring. They need to be rigorous and demanding, as well as caring. They need

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rigorous study, examination and demonstrated success. Yet we have instances of illiterate teachers in some class rooms.

The picture of what is in teacher education is bleak. We have to understand this and roll up our sleeves and find a way through. We must not move in any direction, however, without careful oversight and research.

I always stop at the Jefferson Memorial on the way to the airport, because I respect Jefferson so much. There is a quotation there I would like to read to you. It says:

> But I know also that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilised society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors...("The Roots of Democracy)

Our teacher training institutions are working under situations that existed under our ancestors. We have to work to improve their performance.

SUITLAND, MD, *September 27, 1985.*

Senator ROBERT STAFFORD,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR STAFFORD: I am writing in support of S.J.R. 102, a bill proposed by Senator Zorinsky that would establish a "National Commission on Illiteracy." The Commission proposed would study the causes of illiteracy. I am requesting that this letter and the enclosed exhibits be included in the formal record of the hearings to be held October 1 and October 3, 1985, by the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education and the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities.

Briefly, my son, Brian, was not reading in the fifth grade. Under Public Law 94-142, he was extensively tested with all findings normal except a dislike for school. (Exhibit 1). His "word recognition" was tested and found to be on the third grade level. "Word recognition" is not the same as reading. He has exhibited an inability to read from second grade when I started requesting testing—his Iowa Basic Test Scores and California Achievement Test Scores reflect my concern. (Exhibit 2). Brian was well on his way to becoming another statistic on the road to illiteracy.

By happenstance we met a tutor with only a high school education who told me that she could teach Brian to read. I didn't believe her but I was ready to try anything to enable Brian to read. By using intensive phonics, Brian did learn to read within a few months. Can you imagine what joy it was to hear on the way home from a session, "Mom, I'm going to read every sign on the way home!"

The educational systems of our nation are failing our children and their future. The extent of illiteracy is a threat to our national security—a nation of non-readers cannot produce leaders. The causes of the illiteracy epidemic must be found, rooted out and eradicated.

I hope S.J.R. 102 is passed so that public and private school teachers are educated to properly teach reading. If teachers do not realize or do not know how to teach, they really can't be blamed. Exhibit number three all too blatantly proves this point when its states, "Sometimes a child can decide what a word is by looking at the picture on the page. Or a child can skip over the unknown word and by reading the rest of the sentence can figure out the word from the sense of the sentence." That is how reading is being approached (I didn't use the word "taught") in our schools today. Passage of S.J. 102 is essential for all the Brians in our nation and for our nation itself.

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Thank you for giving me this opportunity.
Sincerely,

JUDITH M. WABY.

Exhibits retained in Subcommittee files.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEAN VAN DEN HENGEL, KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE TEACHER

BECOMING A NATION OF READERS

The Report of the Commission on Reading should be required reading for every primary teacher and school administrator in the country. It is excellent! "America will (indeed) become a nation of readers when verified practices of the best teachers in the best schools can be introduced throughout the country."

WHAT IS YOUR "MINDSET" WHEN YOU READ?

For decades, primary teachers have been expected, nay required, to teach reading by using sight words and basals exclusively. Fortunately for many youngsters, however, phonics has been bootlegged into the classrooms by teachers who are convinced that beginning reading must be taught with a sound-symbol approach.

We, who have been doing this bootlegging and shouting about phonics, are teachers who understand phonics and who teach it easily. We know what we are doing and we understand the alphabetic principle because most of us were taught to read this way. "Sounding-out" is automatic with us!

Jay Samuels of the University of Minnesota talks about "automaticity." He defines it as that state when sufficient practice time has been given so that a skill (or skills) can develop beyond accuracy to "automaticity." Our reading skill, therefore, is based on having learned to read through the sound-symbol approach and our years of practicing it has taken us beyond accuracy to automaticity. "Sounding-out" worked with us . . . we can read well . . . and so, having learned through phonics, we easily see the logic in teaching this way. It's simple for us to understand why researchers today are saying what we've known all along . . . "Teaching the alphabetic principle is essential in beginning reading."

Indeed, we wonder why the Look-say with Basals can still be the prevailing method in schools today. It seems inconceivable and down-right unfair to children that reading would ever be taught as a guessing game of memorizing sight words!

Now, at last, we "phonics-first" people are making inroads in demanding more code emphasis in our primary grades. We and the researchers are convincing more and more educators (and publishers, too) that a sound-symbol approach is imperative when teaching children HOW to read. What is puzzling, however, is that new converts to phonics join us ever so slowly and then only after they have experienced remarkable results from using phonics. Their conversion has not been overnight and the question is:

Why does it take so long to convince today's teachers that a code-emphasis approach is the way to go. Why don't they just dig in with phonics after they've been shown the light?

Excellent, intensive, down-to-earth workshops and teaching sessions on phonics are constantly being given. They show the obvious, logical, sequential steps that must go into beginning reading. This is explained in such great detail that, by the end of a session, the audience usually agrees that phonics is a sound, practical, worthwhile way to go. Thjey say they definitely will use phonics!

Why then, when checking with them later, it is found that they are not following through, they aren't comfortable with phonics, or they can't remember how it all fits together?

What goe wrong? Why don't these teachers find "sounding-out" easy and rewarding as a way to teach? Phonics is really very simple, isn't it?

I'm not sure I have THE answer, but I do have an idea I'd like to share with you. It may give you food for thought.

I believe that these teachers . . . as anxious as they are to use phonics . . . slide back into their old "look and guess" ways of teaching because it is easier for them since they do not automatically "think" in a phonics dimension.

Let me explain by giving some examples that might parallel:

As an elementary teacher, I am expected to teach metric measurements to the students. I can do this fairly well because I have memorized the charts, but I do it without conviction because in my mind I always convert the units to familiar U.S.

Measurements. I frankly admit to you that I would much rather teach yards, feet and inches because I "think" in those terms. Yet, when I was visiting Australia, I was forced to use metrics. I was submerged in metrics by necessity and found that I did not convert to miles, gallons and so on. I was beginning to "think" in the measurements that were given. At the time, it was easy to see the logic and value of having an International System of units based on metrics. When I returned to the United States, however, I quickly fell back into my old ways of teaching because it was easier and I no longer had a real need to "think" in the dimension of metrics.

Isn't getting used to foreign currency a similar parallel? Don't we tend to be uncertain until we make that concerted effort to learn the monetary values automatically by concentrating on the new process and by suing it?

And, is there a parallel in learning a foreign language? What process do you go through before you can honestly "think" in another language? How immersed do you need to be . . . and for how long? Can you be a successful teacher of a foreign language without being able to "think" in that language?

I'm sure many of you will remember the horrendous rethinking and relearning that went on when "New Math" was thrust upon us. For many, it demanded a complete change in mathematical concepts. It was hard and tedious and, perhaps, never fully accepted by those who just couldn't change their thinking to sets, regrouping and different numerical bases.

How can we expect parents, teachers, and tutors who have a "look-say mindset" to catch on to phonics quickly and teach it easily?

We know from research studies that most people teach the way they were taught. Perhaps they reason that if it worked for them, it must be OK, but it's more than that. It's their automatic way of performing the tasks that have developed through years of practice that makes them think their way is best because it now appears so easy to them.

Today's teachers, who are the products of Basals and Look-say, are comfortable teaching the way they were taught. We must relize that to get them to use phonics will take time, gentleness, and slow retraining. It will be hard for them to see that reading is not their magic game of memorizing words.

Teaching reading by phonics does not mean forcing a long list of difficult terms on the children or having them memorize numerous rules. To the contrary, it means gently helping each child realize from the start that alphabet letters are symbols that stand for sounds and, if the sounds are known, the child will be the master of the words on the page and quickly become an independent reader. If we can just help teachers understand the alphabetic principle . . . the basic idea of "sounding-out" . . . and have them begin their teaching this way, they will be on the road to preparing their students for the "automaticity" of phonics.

"But," you ask, "what is 'phonics automaticity'? How is it different from the automaticity of someone taught by look-say?"

What I'm learning from my experience is this:

In reading a sentence that has an unfamiliar word in it, the phonics-taught person automatically and subconsciously sounds-out the word as he comes to it. Going from left to right, he hears the sounds in his head and quickly blends them to make a word. This gives him a close approximation of the word, then he either reads to the end of the sentence to see if the context will give the immediate confirmation he needs or he experiments with the accent of the syllables in the word . . . or he does both. Sometimes looking for common patterns within the word is helpful. For further clarification he goes to the dictionary. The word that has been sounded-out in this fashion quickly becomes part of his sight vocabulary and is often recognized the next time it is seen. This reader has an automaticity or mind-set that has been reached by years of practice and has become so much a part of him that he is seldom aware of how he reads or even how he learned to read.

The reader who was taught by "sight words and meaning first" also has attack skills that have come from years of practice. When reading a sentence that has an unfamiliar word in it, the "automaticity" of the look-say reader seems to be to temporarily skip the unfamiliar word and immediately read to the end of the sentence to see if it's easy to guess what word could fit in the blank. If a satisfactory word can't be guessed at, then an attempt is made to look at the troublesome word's consonant letters and sketchily apply a sound or two. Since vowel sounds were never learned well because they were not taught, they are of little or no help. Sometimes looking for common patterns within the word is worthwhile, but when the reader can't come up with a satisfactory word, he generally is very willing to skip it altogether if he thinks he is getting the gist of the story. He seldom spends any time over a puzzling word because part of his subconscious conviction is that reading fast is important to reading well.

Let's not completely knock this look-say automaticity. Even if we phonics-first teachers think it is inefficient and inaccurate, many people (especially those with keen visual memory) are very satisfied with their procedure and would be devastated if you tried to change their reading habits.

Our big concern must be with the teachers and parents who have been programmed in this fashion and who are content to teach children to read by a "sight word-sentence meaning" approach only. How can we be sure primary teachers understand the alphabetic principle well enough to feel confident and comfortable when teaching youngsters HOW to read by using the natural, logical, sequential code-emphasis approach as recommended by the Commission's report?

Until we can answer this question, it is truthful to say we will continue to have more teaching disabled teachers than we have learning disabled students!

ILLITERACY: The Gut Issue Our Schools are Reluctant to Face

What's all this phuss about phonics?

Guts.1034

Charles M. Richardson

Illiteracy is like the weather: Everybody complains, but (almost) nobody does anything about it, not even serious discussion of cause & effect relationships and meaningful solutions. Jonathan Kozol's book, *Illiterate America,* gives much detail on effects, but his rhetoric on causes fails to identify targets for his "all-out literacy war," and he comes up empty of specifics as to what our "dynamic leaders" and people should *DO*. In Congress, it's like the proverbial pulling of teeth even to study causes of illiteracy! As of this writing, proposed legislation for such a study commission is getting ill treatment from the committees involved, even though there are many co-sponsors. Responsible leaders seem afraid of the issue, and the bulk of the educational establishment is right there helping them drag their collective feet. If problems are to be solved instead of just decried, cause and effect relationships must be discussed.

Much of the education profession must be viewed as "part of the problem," when you consider that a majority of our schools are using inferior reading instruction methods. No one disagrees that the objective of reading is comprehension, or understanding of what is read. But, beyond the recognition of words, comprehension requires adequate vocabulary and background information about the subject in question, plus experience in language and the ability to think and reason. It has been well said that what a person brings to a reading situation crucially affects what he can take out of it.

A much-debated issue is "phonics," how much and when. Phonics is the skill or process of "sounding out," or "decoding" a word by using knowledge of letter sound representations and linguistic rules. These rules cover 85 - 90% of English words consistently enough that several computer programs have been developed to "read" from standard text. You will hear it said, "Phonics is OK in its place, but phonics is not the whole story." While that may be a true statement, it is misleading because it implies that the "rest of the story" is unaffected by phonics, which is *not* true.

The experimental evidence in favor of teaching phonics *first and intensively* is consistent in over 124 studies during the past 60 years. Yet, four out of five schools in the U.S. are doing much the opposite by having children memorize whole words by sight as inseparable configurations (the "look-say" methods: Dick & Jane, etc.), *without the "foundation" of phonics.* To make some semblance of reading possible, such schools buy special reading books called basal readers, which limit the word count to about 300 in the first grade, then gradually increase to 600 - 900 by the end of third grade. The student is encouraged to remember words by length and shape ("configuration clues"), or to guess from context. Children so taught do not comprehend as well in upper grades as phonics- trained students; and it is easy to see why by examining the factors of comprehension mentioned above. ***

The effect on recognition of words is obvious! The look-say student requires that the teacher show and tell him each new word so that he can memorize it. This is a severe literary "straight- jacket" for the average first grader whose speaking vocabulary exceeds 20,000 words. Seniors so trained have difficulty dealing with

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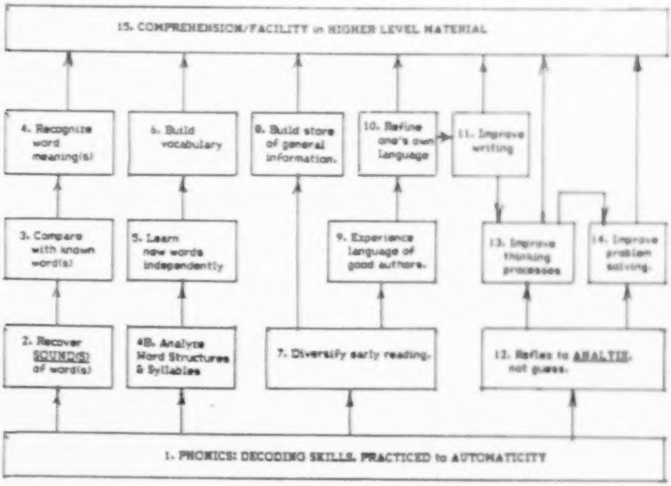
new words for SAT exams. The next factors, vocabulary, background knowledge and language experience, require diversified reading early as preparation for tackling upper- grade science and social studies material. Again, the look-say student is at a serious disadvantage, even though attempts are made to "band-aid" the above elements as "comprehension skills" or "communication skills." That comprehension scores on school tests seem satisfactory in spite of deficient phonics is due in part to the fact that tests have been rewritten to use only the words customarily included in the controlled- vocabulary basal readers.

The reflex either to analyze (think) or guess at a new word is established early, and wrongly in look-say students. If the guess does not produce instant gratification, the student is at a loss. I have seen evidence of this in remedial students (initially taught by look-say) who fall back to "I don't remember that word!" even after having demonstrated appropriate phonic skills. Educators complain that students are poor problem- solvers, but I have heard none suggest a review of existing curriculum practices to see which enhance and which depress thinking.

Despite the research, the leading professional organization, the International Reading Association (IRA) derides phonics. Otherwise intelligent educators who should know better have been swayed from paths of common sense by IRA's demagoguery.

What should the concerned citizen do? Actions need to be more political than technical. Legislators and administrators must be contacted with your messages of concern. Some schools which have switched to phonics have reduced material expense per student from $24 down to $8. Grammatical and mathematical skills have improved as well as scores in vocabulary and comprehension. Fewer failures in reading mean fewer students being mislabelled "LD" and developing frustrations and behavior problems. The business community, the armed forces, and higher education will all benefit from awareness that successful adult reading programs have found effective phonic skills to be necessary in enhancing adult literacy. A bibliography will be furnished upon request.

*** The "Foundation" diagram will be useful here. (optional)


15. COMPREHENSION/FACILITY in HIGHER LEVEL MATERIAL
4. Recognize word meaning(s)
6. Build vocabulary
8. Build store of general information.
10. Refine one's own language
11. Improve writing
3. Compare with known word(s)
5. Learn new words independently
9. Experience language of good authors.
13. Improve thinking processes
14. Improve problem solving.
2. Recover SOUND(S) of word(s)
4B. Analyze Word Structures & Syllables
7. Diversify early reading.
12. Reflex to ANALYZE, not guess.
1. PHONICS: DECODING SKILLS, PRACTICED to AUTOMATICITY

THE FOUNDATIONS of LITERACY

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